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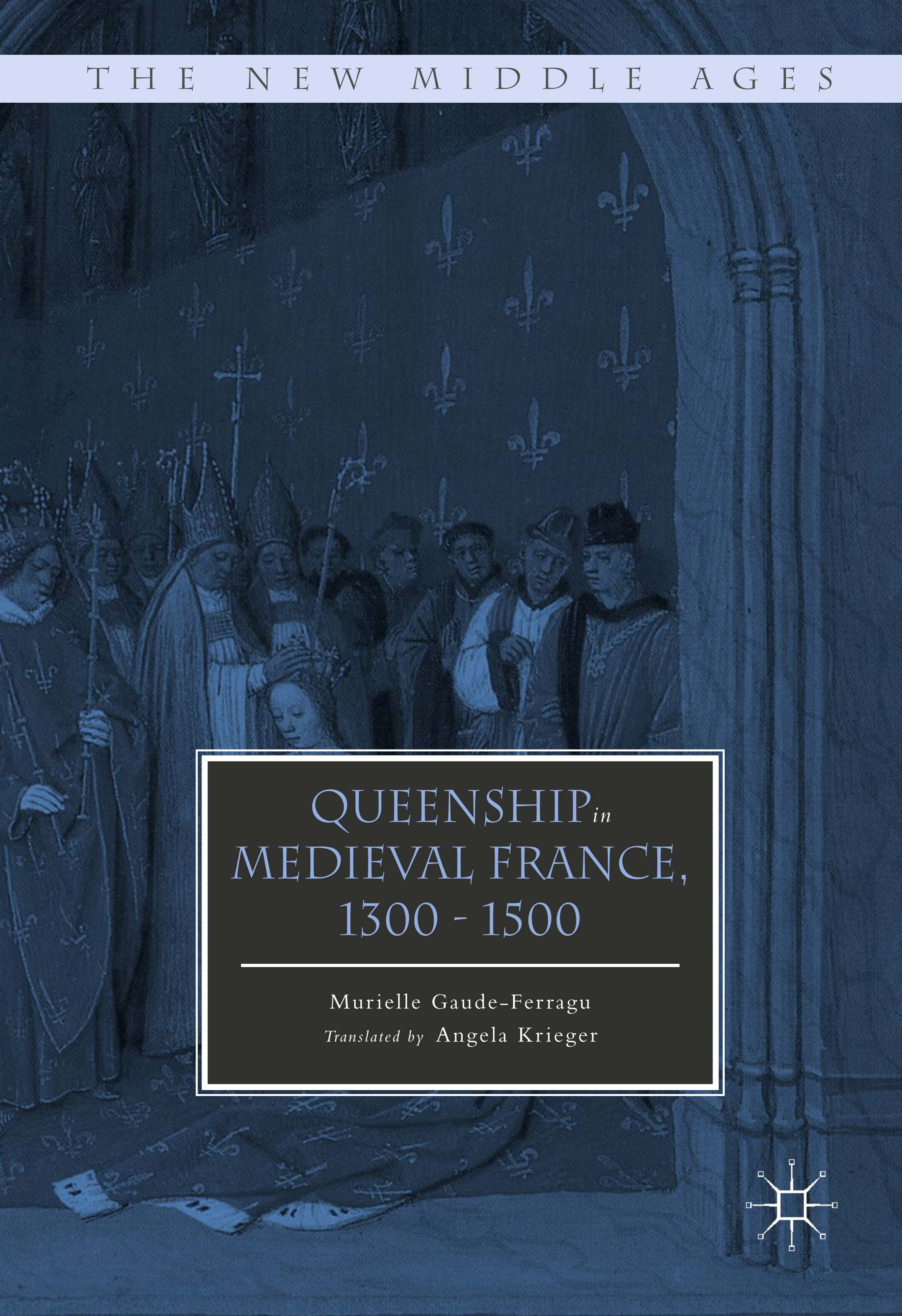

QUEENSHIP in MEDIEVAL FRANCE, 1300 - 1500

Murielle Gaude-Ferragu

Translated by Angela Krieger

The New Middle Ages

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Translated by Angela Krieger

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Cover illustration: Coronation of Marie of Brabant, Philip III's second wife, at the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris. Paris, BnF, Fr. 6465, fol. 292, *Grandes Chroniques de France*, illustrated by Jean Fouquet (c. 1455-1460).

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To Juliette, Chloé and Capucine

THE QUEENS OF FRANCE (FOURTEENTH-FIFTEENTH CENTURIES)

The Last Direct Capetians

Joan of Navarre (d. 1305), wife of Philip IV the Fair (d. 1314): Queen of France
Margaret of Burgundy (d. 1315), first wife of Louis the Stubborn (future Louis X, d. 1316): convicted of adultery in 1314 and imprisoned at Château-Gaillard
Clementia of Hungary (d. 1328), second wife of Louis X: Queen of France
Joan of Burgundy (d. 1330), wife of Philip V (d. 1322): Queen of France
Blanche of Burgundy (d. 1326), first wife of Charles IV (d. 1328): convicted of adultery (her marriage was annulled in 1322)
Marie of Luxembourg (d. 1324), second wife of Charles IV: Queen of France
Joan of Évreux (d. 1371), third wife of Charles IV: Queen of France

The House of Valois

Joan of Burgundy (d. 1349), wife of Philip VI of Valois (d. 1350): Queen of France
Blanche of Navarre (d. 1398), second wife of Philip VI: Queen of France
Bonne of Luxembourg (d. 1349), wife of John (future John II, d. 1364)
Joan of Boulogne (d. 1361), second wife of John II: Queen of France
Joan of Bourbon (d. 1378), wife of Charles V (d. 1380): Queen of France

Isabeau of Bavaria (d. 1435), wife of Charles VI (d. 1422): Queen of France

Marie of Anjou (d. 1463), wife of Charles VII (d. 1461): Queen of France

Margaret of Scotland (d.1445), wife of Louis (future Louis XI, d. 1483)

Charlotte of Savoy (d. 1483), second wife of Louis XI: Queen of France

Margaret of Austria (d. 1530), young fiancée of Charles VIII: called the 'Little Queen' (her engagement was broken off in 1491)

Anne of Brittany (d. 1514), wife of Charles VIII (d. 1498) and subsequently Louis XII (d. 1515): twice crowned Queen of France

Joan of France (d. 1505), first wife of Louis XII: their marriage was annulled in 1498, and Louis XII subsequently married Anne of Brittany

Mary of England (d. 1533), second wife of Louis XII: Queen of France

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Introduction

In September 2004, analysis of Agnès Sorel's remains caused a stir.[1] A team of 28 researchers, led by the paleopathologist Dr Philippe Charlier, wanted to determine if Charles VII's well-known mistress, who died prematurely in February 1450, had been poisoned. The investigation was undertaken when her tomb was transferred from the royal castle in Loches to the Collegiate Church of Saint-Ours. On examining hair samples taken from the deceased woman, scientists found a large amount of mercury, which had led to her quick demise after she had ingested it. Although her death was probably accidental, since the woman known as the 'Lady of Beauty' (*Dame de Beauté*) had been prescribed a pharmaceutical treatment using mercury salts to fight off an intestinal parasite, the mercury levels were so high that the possibility of criminal intent was also raised. As early as 1450, rumors of murder had also spread throughout the French court, but no conclusive proof was ever found to support this claim. In any case, the 'crime of poison' was always mentioned in cases of sudden death.[2]

The name of Agnès Sorel—who was reputed for her beauty and intelligence in addition to being gifted with a real sense of politics, influencing Charles VII's government on numerous occasions—nonetheless remains firmly planted in the minds of the French. Jean Fouquet's famous posthumous portrait of her also glorified her memory. The Lady of Beauty is

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[1] Philippe Charlier, *Médecin des morts. Récits de paléopathologie* (Paris: Fayard, 2006).

[2] Franck Collard, *Le crime de poison au Moyen Âge* (Paris: PUF, 2003).

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exquisitely depicted as a crowned Virgin Mary holding the Infant Jesus on her lap, displaying a fashionable hairstyle for her time, and wearing an unlaced bodice.[3]

Unlike her bothersome rival, Charles VII's wife and 'inglorious queen'[4] Marie of Anjou has remained in the shadows of history. And she is not alone, for most of the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century female sovereigns have been completely forgotten. Except for historians, who still recalls the names of Clementia of Hungary, Joan of Burgundy, Joan of Évreux, Joan of Bourbon and Charlotte of Savoy? Only two queens from this period continue to figure in historical output devoted to the time: Isabeau of Bavaria and Anne of Brittany, the former for the political role she played during the civil war and the signing of the Treaty of Troyes in 1420 (when she became the woman who sold the kingdom of France to the English) and the latter because of her mythologized status as the last Duchess of Brittany, said to have fought to maintain the independence of her principality until the very end.[5]

Further emphasizing the oblivion into which these queens have fallen, no courtly portrait placed them at the forefront of a historical event. The superb iconographical cycle Marie de' Medici commissioned from Rubens in 1622 to decorate the Luxembourg Palace in Paris and which depicted her triumphant majesty for posterity was still a long way away.[6] Indeed, for some time the easel portrait was reserved only for monarchs in France (up until the reign of Charles VII), but their wives were still rarely represented during the fifteenth century. Only a watercolor depicting a lost portrait of Marie of Anjou is found in the Gaignières collection held at the French

---

[3] Anvers, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten (1452-1455), *Jean Fouquet, peintre et enlumineur du XV^{e} siècle*, ed. François Avril (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2003), 121–29.

[4] Bernard Chevalier, 'Marie d'Anjou, une reine sans gloire, 1404-1463', in *Autour de Marguerite d'Écosse. Reines, princesses et dames du XV^{e} siècle*, eds. Geneviève and Philippe Contamine (Paris: H. Champion, 1999), 81–99.

[5] Tracy Adams, *The Life and Afterlife of Isabeau of Bavaria* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010); Rachel Gibbons, 'The Queen as "Social Mannequin": Consumerism and Expenditure at the Court of Isabeau of Bavaria (1393-1422)', *Journal of Medieval History* 26, no. 4 (2000): 371–95; and *Anne de Bretagne. Une histoire, un mythe* (Paris: Somogy, 2007).

[6] Fanny Cosandey, *La reine de France. Symbole et pouvoir* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000), 333–60.

National Library[7] in addition to Jean Hey's moving portrait of the 'Little Queen' (*la petite reine*) Margaret of Austria, who was the future Charles VIII's fiancée at the time. She never became Queen of France, having been dismissed from court in 1491, when the king wanted to marry Anne, heiress to the duchy of Brittany.[8] In contrast, numerous paintings representing 'powerful women' of the same period have been conserved, such as those representing Louis XI and the Duchess of Bourbon's daughter Anne of Beaujeu or those depicting Isabella of Portugal, Duchess of Burgundy and wife of Philip the Good, Grand Duke of the West.[9]

The memory of these forgotten queens therefore needs to be revived. Even so, such a task should not be about leading the reader through a gallery of individual portraits, but should, more fundamentally, involve examining the nature of their power and their roles within the court and kingdom of France. Well before the time of Catherine and Marie de' Medici, these women were playing an essential role in the monarchy, not only because they bore the weight of their dynasty's destiny but also because they embodied royal majesty alongside their husbands.

Indeed, since women were excluded from the French crown in 1316, they could only be 'queen consorts', meaning simply the wives of kings. Contrary to other European states, a princess of the French blood could not inherit the kingdom and become a full-fledged queen wielding the complete range of political powers.

All of them were also subject to the same rules governing the female sex. During the Middle Ages, women did not enjoy the same rights as men. From a legal standpoint, they were perpetual minors, depending first on their fathers and then on their husbands. To both, they had a duty to obey and to submit.[10]

The source of female inferiority, whereby a woman was deemed physically and mentally weaker than her male counterpart, lay in the Creation.

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[7] Collection Gaignières, Bibliothèque nationale de France (hereafter referred to as 'BnF'), Paris, reproduced in Contamine, *Autour de Marguerite d'Écosse*, Fig. 3.

[8] New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Lehman Collection (1490-1491), reproduced in *France 1500. Entre Moyen Âge et Renaissance* (Paris: Réunion des Musées nationaux, 2011), 165.

[9] Anne de France et Pierre de Bourbon by Jean Hey, 1492; Paris, Louvre Museum *Isabelle de Portugal* by Petrus Christus, 1470-1473, Bruges, Groeningemuseum.

[10] Didier Lett, *Hommes et femmes au Moyen Âge. Histoire du genre XII*^{e}*-XV*^{e} *siècle* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2013).

God had first created man in his image. Born of Adam, woman was supposed to act as his companion and assist him in procreation. All fault lay primarily with the woman, for Eve had allowed herself to be seduced by the snake and led her companion down the path of disobedience. Thus, being too vulnerable to temptation, woman found herself subjugated to man, within both marriage and the Cité. During the thirteenth century, the spread of Aristotle's ideas further reinforced clerics' misogyny. According to the philosopher, nature—not God—demanded the distinction between the sexes for the survival of the species. It had endowed man with a strong physique and a developed intellect and woman with a soft, weak body and little wisdom.

Tales about the inequality of the sexes were continually revived. There were a multitude of anti-female proverbs and discourses, such as this particularly juicy quote: 'Woman is an evil that man cannot avoid.'[11] Preachers also devoted a large part of their sermons to female sins. As the worthy descendants of Eve, women were said to be temptresses, liars and gossips, at once lustful, proud and backstabbing. Some texts were especially virulent, such as that of the Dominican Antoninus of Florence (d. 1459), who drafted a lengthy list in a pastoral manual detailing the sins of woman (in alphabetical order), which included everything from 'Avid Animal', 'Concupiscence of the Flesh' and 'False Faith' to 'Mountain of Pride', 'Talkative Throat' and 'Vanity of All Vanities'.[12]

Such a level of acrimony was exceptional and aimed primarily at converting attitudes. Other authors were more nuanced, acknowledging female virtues like gentleness and a naturally compassionate heart. This latter virtue likened women to the Virgin Mary, the mother of God who was 'blessed among women' and whose depiction as the Virgin of Mercy spread throughout the Medieval West. As mediator and universal advocate, the Queen of Heaven protected the faithful and preserved them from earthly peril.[13]

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[11] Sophie Coussemacker, '"La femme est un mal que l"homme ne peut éviter', ou peut-on sauver son âme à la cour?, À la lecture des traités didactiques castillans du XII^{e} au XIV^{e} siècle"', in *Expériences religieuses et chemins de perfection dans l'Occident médiéval. Études offertes à André Vauchez par ses élèves* (Paris: Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, 2012), 375–90.

[12] Antoninus of Florence, *Summa theologica* (Verona: Ex typographia Seminarii, apud Augustinum Carattonium, 1740), 3:25.

[13] Jacques Dalarun, 'Regards de clercs', in *Histoire des femmes. Le Moyen Âge*, eds. Georges Duby, Michelle Perrot and Christiane Klapisch-Zuber (Paris: Plon, 1991), 39; Hélène Millet

During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, both men and women voiced their defense of the 'second sex'.[14] Among them was Christine de Pizan, one of the most important writers of the Late Middle Ages, and Jean Gerson, Chancellor of the University of Paris—both of whom contributed to the 'Debate of the *Romance of the Rose*'.[15] In a treaty written in 1401, Christine de Pizan strongly reacted to the misogynistic allegations contained in the *Romance*, which at that time was celebrated by Charles VI's secretaries Jean de Montreuil and Gontier Col. 'Who are women?' she wrote. 'Are they serpents, wolves, lions, dragons, vipers or devouring beasts? And, by God, they are your mothers, your sisters, your daughters, your wives and your friends. They are you yourselves, and you yourselves are they!'[16]

However, one should not misunderstand this pervading misogyny, for the idea that women were weak and inferior was shared by all. Even Christine de Pizan never challenged the idea that women should obey their husbands. In *The Book of the Three Virtues*, she thus reminded the princess in her parable that she was supposed to be controlled by her 'lord'.[17] In a lengthy defense of female honor (*The Book of the City of Ladies*), however, her words were more nuanced, including the addition that woman was created from Adam's rib in order to be by his side as 'a companion … whom he would love as if they were one flesh, and not his servant lying at his feet'.[18]

To each his or her own role then, as everyone was supposed to acknowledge. Men had the public sphere, justice, government and the necessities of war, while women had the domestic sphere, submission to their husbands and child rearing. There were numerous legal and political implica-

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and Claudia Rabel, *La Vierge au Manteau du Puy-en-Velay. Un chef-d'œuvre du gothique international (vers 1400-1410)* (Paris: Fage, 2011).

[14] Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. H. M. Parshley (New York City: Vintage Books-Random House, 1989; first published 1949).

[15] Françoise Autrand, *Christine de Pizan. Une femme en politique* (Paris: Fayard, 2009), 379–98.

[16] Ibid., 160.

[17] 'She will be humble toward him in deed, word, and attitude. She will obey him without complaint.' *A Medieval Woman's Mirror of Honor: The Treasury of the City of Ladies, Christine de Pizan*, trans. Charity Cannon Willard (New York: Persea Books, 1989), 98.

[18] 'He put Adam to sleep and created the body of woman from one of his ribs. This was a sign that she was meant to be his companion standing at his side, whom he would love as if they were one flesh, and not his servant lying at his feet.' Christine de Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies*, trans. Rosalind Brown-Grant (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1999), 22.

tions behind this asymmetry between the sexes.[19] Contracts, donations and testaments underwritten by a woman had to be drafted with either her father's or her husband's consent. Similarly, at the district, seigneurial and kingdom levels, authority was primarily wielded by men. In Italian cities, women could eventually engage in economic dealings, but they were not under any circumstances allowed to elect anyone or be elected to any office. They neither took oaths, participated in public life nor intervened in assemblies.[20]

When it came to passing on property, however, it was proper to establish regional differences according to inheritance customs. Furthermore, the absence of a male heir often authorized a woman to wield power. In reality, women thus had to play diverse political and economic roles in addition to religious and cultural ones.

Among other issues, the history of gender has strived to define these plural roles. The place of women in medieval society has never before so thoroughly fed historiographical output on this subject in both Anglophone countries and France. Some authors have focused specifically on 'powerful women' in the Medieval West and the notion of 'queenship'.[21] The queen of France has inspired many studies, which have essentially centered around the Early Middle Ages (see Pauline Stafford and Régine le Jan)[22] or the early modern period (see Fanny Cosandey and Bartolomé

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[19] Lett, *Hommes et femmes,* 133–46.

[20] Didier Lett, 'Genre et paix. Des mariages croisés entre quatre communes de la Marche d'Ancône en 1306', *Annales HSS* 67, no. 3 (2012): 654.

[21] Theresa Earenfight, *Queenship and Power: Queenship in Medieval Europe* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); John C. Parsons, *Medieval Queenship* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993); and Anne J. Duggan, ed., *Queens and Queenship in Medieval Europe* (Woodbridge: Boyder and Brewer, 1997). On English queens, see Joanna L. Laynesmith, *The Last Medieval Queens* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). On Spanish queens, see: Janna Bianchini, *The Queen's Hand: Power and Authority in the Reign of Berenguela of Castile* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012); Theresa Earenfight, *The King's Other Body: Maria of Castile and the Crown of Aragon* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012). On queens and princesses in medieval Europe, see: Isabelle Poutrin and Marie-Karine Schaub, eds., *Femmes et pouvoir politique. Les princesses d'Europe, XV^{e}-XVIII^{e} siècle* (Paris: Bréal, 2007); Armel Nayt-Dubois and Emmanuelle Santinelli-Foltz, eds., *Femmes de pouvoir et pouvoir des femmes dans l'Occident médiéval et moderne* (Valenciennes: Lez Valenciennes n° 41/42—Presses universitaires de Valenciennes, 2009); and Eric Bousmar et al., eds., *Femmes de pouvoir, femmes politiques durant les derniers siècles du Moyen Âge et au cours de la première Renaissance* (Bruxelles: De Boeck, 2012).

[22] Pauline Stafford, *Queens, Concubines and Dowagers: The King's Wife in the Early Middle Ages* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1983; repr. Leicester University Press, 1998);

Bennassar).[23] However, there has never been a synthesis of these studies that looks at queens of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, which is what this work seeks to examine.

Such an examination leads one down many paths, where political, religious and cultural histories converge with the history of gender. It implies defining the queen's status as well as her role(s) within the royalty, the court and civil society. The female sovereign not only had rights, but duties too. She had to practice the 'profession of queen', which was not simply reduced to the acts of procreation and caring for the children of France. Far from being confined solely to the private sphere, she participated in the communication of power, and, as her husband's corporeal double, she embodied the female equivalent of majesty. At once queen of ceremonies, queen of hearts and renowned patroness, she also contributed to the proper functioning of 'court society'.[24] Isabeau of Bavaria even played a broader political role due to her husband's intermittent 'absences' (due to bouts of madness).

Such an examination should also make it possible to observe the transformations in reginal power, since the place and roles assigned to the queen changed greatly over the course of the Late Middle Ages. As one example among many others, her body—which was for a long time destined to be itinerant, albeit interred in the most important Parisian sanctuaries—subsequently entered the prestigious 'cemetery of kings': the Abbey of Saint-Denis. It is therefore necessary to consider the implications—if, in fact, there were any—of the rediscovery of Salic Law concerning her status.[25] This book commences under the reign of those 'accursed kings' (Louis X, Philip V and Charles IV, who had no male descendants),[26] beginning with what historians consider to be the most significant event in the history of queens: the exclusion of women from the French crown

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Régine Le Jan, *Femmes, pouvoir et société dans le haut Moyen Âge* (Paris: Picard, 2001); and Marion Facinger, 'A Study of Medieval Queenship: Capetian France, 987-1237', *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History* 5 (1968): 3–48.

[23] Cosandey, *La reine de France*; Bartolomé Bennassar, *Le lit, le pouvoir et la mort. Reines et princesses d'Europe de la Renaissance aux Lumières* (Paris: Éd. de Fallois, 2006).

[24] Norbert Elias, *The Court Society*, ed. Stephen Mennell (Dublin: UCD Press, 2006; first published 1969).

[25] Ralph E. Giesey, *Le rôle méconnu de la loi salique. La succession royale XIV^{e}-XV^{e} siècles* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2007).

[26] Maurice Druon, *The Accursed Kings*, book 1, *The Iron King*, trans. Humphrey Hare (London: Harper, 2013; first published 1955).

during two crises related to succession in 1316 and 1328. Firmly planted in popular memory, Salic Law—which was exhumed by Richard Lescot in 1358—served to justify this exclusion after the fact. The promulgation of Salic Law apparently deeply modified the nature of the queen's power. From the moment queens were dismissed from any political action, new areas of intervention—particularly ceremonial ones—opened up for them.[27] This book concludes with the end of Anne of Brittany's reign (d. 1514, in Blois), one that was situated at the crossroads of the medieval and the early modern periods and which led to a completely different world altogether: the Renaissance.

The challenge of this work therefore lies in grasping the meaning and complexity of the office of queen and thus elaborating a female history of power.

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[27] Cosandey, *La reine de France*.

PART I

Acceding to Royal Dignity

Chapter 1: Marrying the King

During the sixth century in the Byzantine Empire, the marriage of the future Emperor Justinian (527-565 CE) was governed by a strange custom, whereby the bride Theodora—the daughter of a bear trainer—was chosen at a beauty contest he had organized.[1]

Far from this particular practice, the queens of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century France were all of noble blood and descended from the most important families in either Europe or the kingdom, thus presenting a concentration of theoretically irreproachable moral and religious qualities by dint of their birth and education. Their beauty was of little importance, at least for those who presided over the marriages. An official portrait—an established practice in France since at least the second half of the fourteenth century—was usually only sent after the engagement, serving as confirmation that negotiations had taken place and not as a preliminary to the union. It could be said that talk of a king falling in love with an image has only very rarely been verified. Some fine anecdotes have nonetheless been recounted. In 1385, Charles VI's advisors deemed it time for the king to have a wife. Unable to choose between three potential brides, they

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[1] Italy, Ravenna, Basilica San Vitale (mosaics of Justinian and Theodora).

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sent a painter to do their portraits. Charles VI was said to have chosen Isabeau of Bavaria because he was charmed by her beauty.[2]

Whatever the reality, chroniclers were always careful to highlight how attractive the princess was, since physical beauty reflected that of the soul. Such beauty corresponded to precise aesthetic archetypes. A beautiful woman had long blond hair (like the Virgin Mary), an oval face, a dainty mouth, blue eyes and a slim waist.[3]

This traditional and stereotypical portrait often evaded the young woman's actual physical characteristics. The courtly idealization of women remained a constant throughout the fifteenth century, whereas verism prevailed for men, whose flaws were not concealed but instead accentuated in order to render each of their faces even more unique. At the end of the fifteenth century, Jean Perréal and Jean Bourdichon, who 'portraitured' Anne of Brittany, offered an idealized vision of her physique (Fig. 1.1).[4] Individualization did exist nonetheless, as the famous illumination depicting Isabeau of Bavaria (Fig. 1.2) attests. In this image, which decorated the title page of Christine de Pizan's *Collected Works* (1414), the queen is depicted with a high forehead, a large mouth and a double chin, physical traits that are also found on her effigy at Saint-Denis. Marie of Anjou's official portrait also reveals a few rather individual features, even if she has still been somewhat idealized.[5]

Marriages, which were fiercely negotiated, were thus primarily affairs of the state, responding to numerous diplomatic, territorial and dynastic imperatives.

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[2] *Chronique du religieux de Saint-Denis, contenant le règne de Charles VI, de 1380 à 1422*, ed. M. L. Bellaguet (Paris: CTHS, 1842; repr. 1994), 1:359.

[3] Didier Le Fur, 'Anne de Bretagne était-elle belle ?', in *Anne de Bretagne, une histoire, un mythe* (Paris: Somogy, 2007), 41. On the last medieval English queens, see Laynesmith, *The Last Medieval Queens*, 51.

[4] Jean Bourdichon, *Grandes Heures d'Anne de Bretagne* (Tours, 1505-1508), Paris, BnF, Ms. Latin 9474, fol. 3.

[5] Contamine, *Autour de Marguerite d'Écosse*, Fig. 3.

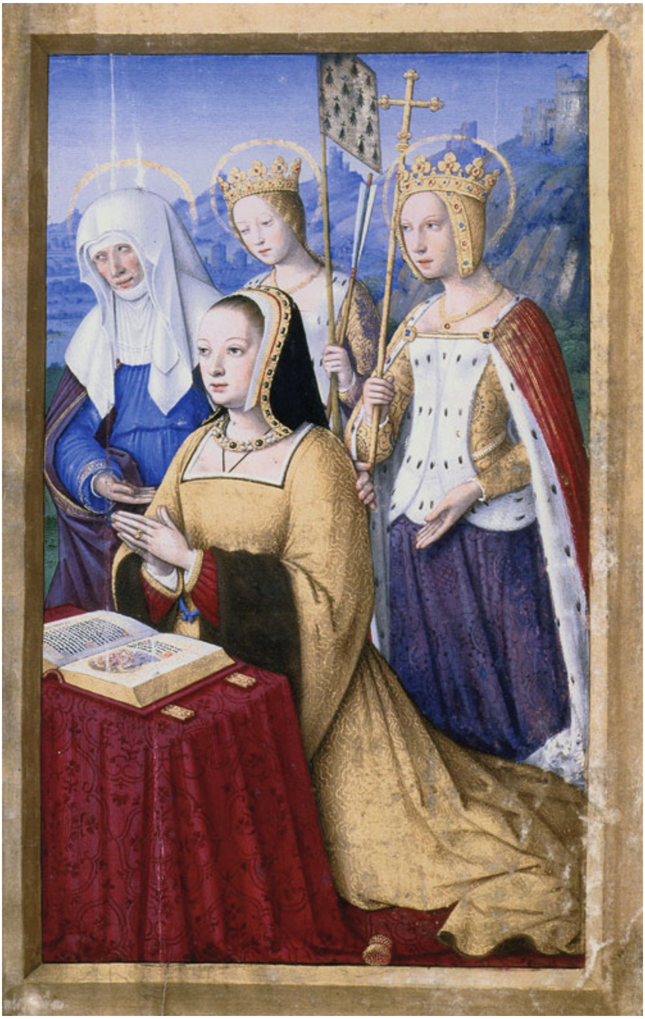

Fig. 1.1 *Portrait of Anne of Brittany*, Jean Bourdichon, *Grandes Heures d'Anne de Bretagne* (Tours, 1505-1508), Paris, BnF, Ms. Latin 9474, fol. 3.

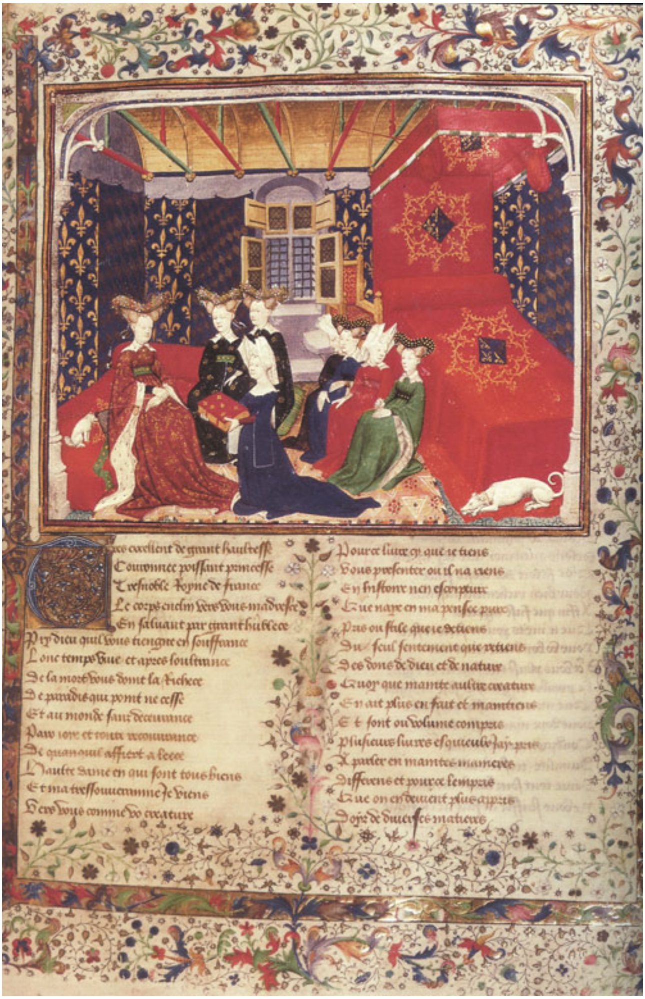

Fig. 1.2 *Isabeau of Bavaria*, London, British Library, Ms. Harley 4431, fol. 3.

Matrimonial Strategies

Reinforcing Alliances: Diplomacy in Action

Matrimonial unions belonged to the realm of courtly diplomacy, both foreign and French. They made it possible to establish alliances between the great houses of Europe and reinforced France's position on the European chessboard.[6] During the fourteenth century, sovereigns favored the princesses of the Holy Roman Empire, with John II marrying Bonne of Luxembourg and Charles VI marrying Isabeau of Bavaria. Indeed, the first Valois king Philip VI (whose legitimacy had long been questioned) had sought out a prestigious union for his eldest son John. His close friendship with the King of Bohemia, John of Luxembourg (also known as John the Blind, who died at Crécy in 1346), whom he had known since childhood, became a legal alliance thanks to the marriage of their respective children John (future John II the Good) and Guta (Bonne, as her Christian name was translated).[7] In their marriage contract, which was signed in Fontainebleau in 1332, the military clauses were stipulated in detail (in the event of war, especially with England, the King of Bohemia would join the French royal army) along with the future bride's dowry (120,000 florins). However, Bonne never became queen, falling ill with the black plague in 1349 and dying a year before John acceded to the French throne. Her son Charles V remained forever faithful to both her memory (wanting his entrails to be interred next to his mother's body at Maubuisson Abbey) and the alliance with the prestigious House of Luxembourg, which became imperial when Bonne's brother Charles IV acceded to the Empire in 1355.

'Rapprochement' with Germany was again promoted at the end of the fourteenth century. Elizabeth (who signed documents using her Gallicized name 'Isabelle', but who will be referred to here as Isabeau for the sake of historiographical convenience and despite the depreciative nature of the name) belonged to the powerful Wittelsbach family, who ruled over Bavaria and the Rhenish and Upper Palatinate. The daughter of Duke

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[6] Richard C. Famiglietti, *Tales from the Marriage Bed from Medieval France (1300-1500)* (Providence: Picardy Press, 1992); Christiane Raynaud, 'Les mariages royaux : une affaire d'État', in *Mythes, cultures et sociétés (XIII^{e}-XV^{e} siècles). Images de l'Antiquité et iconographie politique* (Paris: Le Léopard d'or, 1995), 31–55; and David d'Avray, *Medieval Marriage: Symbolism and Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[7] Françoise Autrand, *Charles V* (Paris: Fayard, 1994), 23.

Stephen III of Bavaria-Ingolstadt, she spent her childhood in Munich. Her marriage to Charles VI, which was celebrated in 1385, was the result of a match desired by Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, who wanted to forge a powerful alliance between the Houses of France and Bavaria.[8]

Peace and Reconciliation: Placatory Unions and Territorial Expansion

The aims of peace and reconciliation presided over alliances when a union was meant to establish harmony and seal diplomatic peace. Among the various forms of reconciliation between states, marriage occupied a central role by creating new ties between groups that had recently become related. The woman played a crucial role by conveying peace between the involved families and, if she was a princess, to the entire kingdom.[9] In this respect, the duchy of Brittany, where a marriage meant to establish peace led to numerous territorial benefits for France, offers a particularly eloquent example.

War between the duchy and the kingdom had gone on for far too long. In February 1486, Duke Francis II of Brittany had his daughters Anne and Isabeau recognized as his sole legitimate heiresses. Since Louis XI had bought the rival Penthièvre family's rights to the ducal crown, Charles VIII could legitimately lay claim to his Breton heritage. He further enforced his legal right with a military campaign that lasted nearly two years and ended with the Battle of Saint-Aubin-du-Cormier (July 1488). Defeated, Francis II died two months later. At the time, the principality was partly occupied by the royal army. The peace treaty (Treaty of Verger) stipulated that Anne could not marry without the king's consent.

From 1488 to 1491, Anne of Brittany, surrounded by her council and notably her chancellor, Philip of Montauban, attempted to defend her rights by pursuing her father's diplomatic strategy. Only 11 years old in 1488, she was still quite young, and her decisions were influenced—and even determined—by those close to her in the Breton party. She was crowned duchess in February 1489 at Saint-Pierre Cathedral in Rennes and married Maximilian of Austria, King of the Romans (December

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[8] Rachel Gibbons, 'La politique de la chambre comme diplomatie européenne : l'exemple du mariage de Charles VI et d'Isabeau de Bavière (17 juillet 1385)', in *L'Europe à la recherche de son identité*, ed. Christiane Villain-Gandossi (Paris: Éd. du CTHS, 2002), 185–201.

[9] Lett, 'Genre et paix', 642.

1490), by proxy and without Charles VIII's consent, hoping that her husband would provide her with military assistance—which ultimately never came. Anne was subsequently obliged to approach the king, who once more wanted to conquer the principality. In spring 1491, he was the undisputed master. His army had occupied the primary cities, and Breton resistance was collapsing. Marriage made it possible to establish a reconciliation between both parties and negotiate the duchy's transfer to France, using the law instead of weapons.[10]

According to custom, a contract was first signed by both the spouses (Treaty of Langeais). It stated that Charles VIII was marrying Anne to maintain perpetual and indissoluble peace between the French crown and the duchy of Brittany. Anne, whom the king had declared her father's sole heiress, named Charles—the new Duke of Brittany—her perpetual procurator. Should she die childless before her husband, she gave him her rights over the duchy. Charles declared the same: if he died before Anne without a living child, she would once more become the sole Duchess of Brittany on the condition that she remarry his successor, which she did by marrying Louis XII in 1499.

Reinforcing the Dynasty: Prestigious Blood Ties

With the change of branch in 1328, (the Valois line was a new "branch" of the Capetian lineage), marriages were equally used to reinforce the legitimacy of a contested dynasty—that of the Valois—by injecting it with the blood of the prestigious Capetians, thereby unifying two branches of the same lineage (the Capetians were already careful to marry princesses of Carolingian blood).

Indeed, the political situation at the time was an unusual one. When the last direct Capetian died in 1328, his cousin Philip VI took the throne. Despite being Philip III's grandson and Philip IV's nephew, the change of royal bloodline was called into question as much outside the kingdom as within it (as early as 1337, the King of England, Edward III, claimed the French crown, as did Charles II, known as Charles the Bad, King of Navarre and Count of Évreux). Thus, the first Valois sought to marry Capetians, who were primarily direct descendants of Saint Louis and whose prestigious blood ties endowed them with further legitimacy.[11] When Joan of Burgundy (herself the Holy King's granddaughter by her mother Agnes) died in 1349, Philip VI married his second wife Blanche of Navarre, who was of Capetian blood (Louis X the Stubborn's granddaughter). This marriage made reconciliation—albeit temporary—with the princess's brother Charles of Navarre possible. Theirs was a romantic union, at least for Philip VI, who was spellbound by Blanche's beauty. She was 40 years his junior and initially destined for his son, the future John II, before Philip VI decided to marry her instead. However, their marriage, which was celebrated in 1350, was short-lived, for he died less than one year after the wedding.[12]

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[10] Yvonne Labande-Mailfert, *Charles VIII* (Paris: Fayard, 1986), 85; Didier Le Fur, *Charles VIII* (Paris: Perrin, 2006), 225; and Dominique Le Page, 'Qu'est-ce qu'Anne de Bretagne connaissait de son duché ?', in *Anne de Bretagne, Une histoire, un mythe*, 25.

His grandson Charles, who was then Duke of Normandy (the future Charles V) was also wed in 1350, marrying the daughter of Peter I and Isabella of Valois, Joan of Bourbon, who was a Capetian princess and his cousin. The Dukes of Bourbon were descended from Saint Louis's sixth son Robert of Clermont and thereby shared the blood—and virtues—of the Holy King.[13]

Such homogamous marriages between close relatives were frequent. The Capetians had already shown a tendency to 'marry the closest relative', within four degrees of consanguinity. Nonetheless, while the search for additional prestige or legitimacy played a role in justifying certain marriages, such an explanation should not be overestimated. For some princes, marrying a direct Capetian was less important than obtaining a sizeable patrimony (as was the case of Philip V and Joan, heiress to the county of Burgundy), a useful alliance (Philip VI and Joan of Burgundy) or what was hoped to be a lasting rapprochement (Philip VI and Blanche of Navarre).

Royal alliances were primarily first marriages, at least for the women involved. The foreign or French princesses who wed were all young virgins. Joan of Navarre was 12 years old when she married Philip IV the Fair. As for Joan of Évreux, Isabeau of Bavaria and Anne of Brittany (when she married Charles VIII), they were all 14 at the time of their respective weddings. Only two queens were widowed during the medieval period: Joan of Boulogne, heiress to the counties of Auvergne and Boulogne as well as John II's second wife, and Anne of Brittany, who remarried Louis XII as a result of the Treaty of Langeais.

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[11] Anne-Hélène Allirot, *Filles de roy de France. Princesses royales, mémoire de saint Louis et conscience dynastique (de 1270 à la fin du XIV^e^ siècle)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 11.

[12] Brigitte Buettner, 'Le système des objets dans le testament de Blanche de Navarre,' *Clio* 19: *Femmes et images* (2004).

[13] Allirot, *Filles de roy de France*, 525.

The situation was similar in the neighboring state of England. Since both kingdoms frequently interacted and shared so many similarities, the two can be compared in order to put into perspective what did or did not make France distinctive at the time. During the Late Middle Ages, monarchs usually married foreign (often French) princesses who were virgins of noble blood. Only two were widows when they became queen: Joan of Navarre, Dowager Duchess of Brittany, and Elizabeth Woodville.[14]

Except for Anne of Brittany, dowager queens did not remarry. For decades, Charles IV's widow Joan of Évreux and Philip VI's widow Blanche of Navarre thus lived in chaste widowhood at court or within their dowers. The reason for this was simple. The clergy considered second weddings with caution, offering as a model the continent waiting period of the prophetess Anne, a respectable widow of 84 years old who 'departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day'.[15] The church viewed widowhood as a period of atonement for conjugal life, returning the woman to the most complete state of purity: chastity. It also gave the widow more legal and financial autonomy, which she probably did not want to renounce. But the queens' waiting period can also be explained by political motives, for those who had been married to the very Christian monarch and had borne the blood of France could not remarry elsewhere.

This was not the case for kings, who concluded new marriages as soon as they had been widowed. Charles IV had three wives in succession: Blanche of Burgundy (the marriage was annulled in 1322, under the guise of consanguinity but in reality for adultery), Marie of Luxembourg (who died during a trip in the Berry region in 1324) and Joan of Évreux. Indeed, he had to ensure the continuation of the dynasty. After Joan of Burgundy's death (1349), Philip VI married his second wife Blanche of Navarre. His son John II, Bonne of Luxembourg's widower (1349), remarried Joan of Boulogne. A century later, the Dauphin Louis (the future Louis XI), the heirless widower of Margaret of Scotland, married Charlotte of Savoy. A few months after Anne of Brittany died in 1514, Louis XII remarried Mary of England, the youngest daughter of Henry VII Tudor and Elizabeth of York.

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[14] Laynesmith, *The Last Medieval Queens*, 40.

[15] Luke 2:36–38, in Elodie Lequain, 'L'éducation des femmes de la noblesse en France au Moyen Âge (XIII^{e}-XV^{e} siècle)' (PhD diss., Paris-X Nanterre, 2005), 430.

In the event of a remarriage, the age difference was sometimes considerable. Philip VI's second wife Blanche of Navarre was 40 years his junior. Another well-known example is presented by John, Duke of Berry, who, in June 1389, was a grandfather approaching the age of 50 when he married Joan of Boulogne, a 12-year-old child. It amused the court that Joan was even younger than the duke's youngest daughter. Jean Froissart enjoyed giving a description of the duke's second wedding. His account of Charles VI's response to the wedding announcement was as follows:

> 'Good uncle, what will you do with such a young girl? She is only 12 years old and you 60. In good faith, it is madness that you should think of such a thing.'
>
> The Duke replied: 'If the girl from Boulogne is young, I will spare her three or four years until she is a woman.'
>
> 'Indeed,' said the King, 'but she will not spare you.'[16]

'The School for Wives': Educating the Princesses

All of these princesses, both foreign and French, had received a first-rate education. Some were raised at the French court from childhood, such as Philip IV's wife Joan of Navarre and Charles VIII's young fiancée Margaret of Austria. Others were educated within their own families in their respective principalities.

Educators had long debated what women should be taught. In 1265, Philip of Novara had advised against teaching girls—except for nuns—how to read and write.[17] He was, however, in the minority. Far from being neglected when it came to aristocratic education, women were the recipients of veritable *miroirs aux princesses* (didactic works presenting the exemplary image of the good ruler or, for women, the ideal princess), which reveal all the care that went into their training—as religious as it was moral and intellectual. The authors of such books were primarily clerics (Durand de Champagne, Vincent de Beauvais and Giles of Rome), though some laymen also wrote in order to perfect their own children's education (as Saint Louis did for his son Philip and daughter Isabella, in addition to Geoffroy de La Tour Landry, for his three daughters, and Anne of France, Duchess of Bourbon, whose *Lessons* were addressed to her daughter Suzanne).[18]

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[16] Françoise Autrand, *Jean de Berry* (Paris: Fayard, 2000), 242.

[17] Philippe de Novare, *Les quatre âges de l'homme*, ed. Marcel de Freville (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1888), 16; Lequain, *L'éducation des femmes.*

Beyond these theoretical treatises, sources on the practice of that time provide information about the educational methods of the period. Young princesses learned to read and often write. Such instruction often took place within the palace under a tutor. At the court of Savoy in the mid-fifteenth century, Pierre Aronchel was the schoolmaster of Louis and Anne of Cypress's eldest daughters Margaret and Charlotte (future wife of Louis XI). The boys, despite the sometimes considerable age difference between them, shared another schoolmaster: Girard de Gaules.[19]

Like their brothers, young princesses first learned reading and religion. They learned to read using an alphabet book (Margaret of Austria learned the alphabet using a book handsomely bound in black velvet[20]) and continued with psalters and books of hours. At the age of seven, young Joan of France, who was married to the Count of Montfort, received a richly illuminated book of hours of Notre-Dame from her mother Isabeau of Bavaria.[21] During the fourteenth century, young girls at the court of Savoy practiced reading using liturgical collections, matins and penitential psalms, which were replaced by books of hours in the fifteenth century. Like their brothers, Savoyard princesses also learned to write.[22]

Latin, however, was reserved for boys, which was one of the primary differences when it came to education. Princesses only knew the necessary prayers and formulas for following mass and reading their books of hours. There were a few exceptions nonetheless. Saint Louis's sister Isabella of France (d. 1270), for example, was reputedly an excellent Latinist.[23]

Failing Latin, aristocratic ladies knew other languages. John II's future wife Bonne of Luxembourg, who had been raised in Bohemia, spoke Czech, German and French.[24] Yolanda of Bar—daughter of Robert, Duke of Bar, and wife of John I, King of Aragon—could read 'Limousin' and Latin in addition to being able to write in French and Catalan.[25] Others had a harder time learning a foreign language. During her entry ceremony in Paris in 1389, Isabeau of Bavaria was criticized for her poor understanding of French—four years after she had arrived in the kingdom.[26]

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[18] *Les enseignements d'Anne de France, duchesse de Bourbonnais et d'Auvergne, à sa fille Susanne de Bourbon*, ed. Martial-Alphonse Chazaud (Moulins: C. Desroziers, 1878).

[19] Nathalie Blancardi, *Les petits princes. Enfance noble à la cour de Savoie (XV^{e} siècle)* (Lausanne: Cahiers lausannois d'histoire médiévale, 2001), 16–17.

[20] Florence Trombert, 'Une reine de quatre ans à la cour de France: Marguerite d'Autriche, 1484-1485', in *Autour de Marguerite d'Écosse*, 144.

[21] Lequain, *L'éducation des femmes*, 675.

[22] Blancardi, *Les petits princes*, 34.

[23] Lequain, *L'éducation des femmes*, 149.

[24] Autrand, *Jean de Berry*, 38.

Royal Weddings

Royal marriages involved a number of steps, including negotiating and drafting the contract between both parties, obtaining papal dispensations in the case of consanguinity, and celebrating the religious ceremony and festivities.[27]

Matrimonial Transactions: Dowries and Dowers

Marriages, which encompassed both political and lineal strategies, were governed by very precise contracts signed before the celebration and formalizing the essential elements by establishing the dowry and the dower. The dowry was the allocation the bride's family made for the groom and the household's needs.[28] It entailed full ownership and could be transferred to someone else. It could be either territorial (as it was for Joan of Navarre-Champagne, Philip V's wife Joan of Burgundy, Margaret of Austria and Anne of Brittany) or primarily financial (in the cases of Joan of Bourbon and Charlotte of Savoy). While, in theory, the woman could make use of it freely, it was more frequently managed by her husband.

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[25] Claire Ponsich, 'Violant de Bar (1365-1431). Ses liens et réseaux de relations par le sang et l'alliance', in *Reines et princesses au Moyen Âge* (Montpellier: Les cahiers du *CRISIMA*, 2001), 264.

[26] Françoise Autrand, *Charles VI* (Paris: Fayard, 1986), 238.

[27] Anne-Hélène Allirot, 'Les mariages royaux à la cour de France, entre faste et discrétion (du règne de saint Louis à celui de Charles V', in *La cour du prince. Cour de France, cours d'Europe (XIII^{e}-XV^{e} siècles)*, eds. Murielle Gaude-Ferragu, Bruno Laurioux and Jacques Paviot (Paris: Champion, 2011), 232.

[28] Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, 'Le complexe de Griselda. Dot et dons de mariage au Quattrocento', *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome, Moyen âge-Temps modernes* 94, no. 1 (1982): 7–43; Klapisch-Zuber, *La maison et le nom. Stratégies et rituels dans l'Italie de la Renaissance* (Paris: Éd. de l'EHESS, 1990), 185–213; and François Bougard, Laurent Feller and Régine Le Jan, eds., *Dots et douaires dans le haut Moyen Âge* (Rome: École française de Rome, 2002).

Territorial dowries could be considerable, such as those provided by Margaret of Austria and Anne of Brittany. In the case of the latter, one cannot speak of a dowry in the strict sense of the word, since she was an orphan when she married and had already inherited the duchy of Brittany.[29] Anne's was not an isolated case. The exceptional dowry Eleanor, sole heiress to the duchy of Aquitaine, brought to her marriage to Louis VII in 1137 is particularly memorable; her remarriage to Henry Plantagenet, the future Henry II, in 1152 ultimately allowed England to acquire this vast territory.[30] At the end of the thirteenth century, the future Philip the Fair made two highly important acquisitions for the French crown by marrying Joan of Navarre (in 1284): the kingdom of Navarre and the county of Champagne.

The land allocated by the future queens of France was sometimes much more modest in scope. Joan of Évreux, Charles IV's wife and the last direct Capetian queen, 'only' brought with her the castellany of Brie-Comte-Robert, which she had received from her mother.[31] Other allocations were monetary instead of territorial. In January 1451, the future Louis XI—then 27 years old—married 10-year-old Charlotte of Savoy against his father Charles VII's wishes and for the financial contribution promised by Louis, Duke of Savoy.[32] The duke, however, took a long time to honor these promises.[33]

Mirroring the dowry, the dower was the allocation the husband made to his wife, as formalized in the marriage contract. It concerned personal property and the life annuity granted to the widow on her husband's private property. She only obtained it when conjugal ties were broken by her husband's death, at which time the dower was hers until she died and would remain in her possession in the event of her remarriage. Within the royal context, the dower was meant to allow the widowed queen to continue to live according to her rank. Territorial property, removed from the royal domain, was given in usufruct and had to be returned in full after the widow's death. During the thirteenth century, the allotted property for dowers customarily included between a third and half of the husband's property at the time of their marriage.[34] This rule could obviously not be applied to royalty, so the following arrangement was established: the king allotted a sum of money in the promised dower, which was then deducted from a certain amount of territorial property that had to be estimated beforehand.

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[29] Michel Nassiet, 'Les reines héritières: d'Anne de Bretagne à Marie Stuart', in *Femmes et pouvoir politique. Les princesses d'Europe, XV*^{e}*-XVIII*^{e} *siècles*, eds. Isabelle Poutrin and Marie-Karine Schaub (Paris: Bréal, 2007), 134.

[30] Jean Flori, *Aliénor d'Aquitaine. La reine insoumise* (Paris: Payot, 2004).

[31] Jean-Marc Cazilhac, 'Le douaire des reines' (PhD diss., Université Paris-IV, 1996), 50.

[32] Jean Favier, *Louis XI* (Paris: Tallandier, 2012).

[33] Le Fur, *Charles VIII*, 20.

During the Late Middle Ages, the land bestowed in royal dowers geographically oscillated between two regions. One (in the fourteenth century) was centered around the Parisian Basin, extending to the west (the Seine Valley), the southeast (Gâtinais) and the east (Champagne and Brie). The other (in the fifteenth century) was located in the Languedoc region. Clementia of Hungary, Louis X's widow from 1316 until her death in 1328, thus received a dower to the value of 25,000 livres tournois, primarily situated in the Gâtinais region (Corbeil, Fontainebleau, Montargis, Nemours and Beaugency). Joan of Évreux, who was a widow between 1328 and 1371, received a dower to the value of 19,000 livres tournois, essentially in the regions of Champagne and Brie.

During the fifteenth century, the territorial seat of dowers was primarily centered around the Languedoc region. When Marie of Anjou obtained a new allocation of her dower in 1425, part of the kingdom still escaped the king's authority.[35] Charles VII therefore turned his attention to the towns and castellanies in southern France (for 20,000 livres tournois). The queen received the salt storehouses in Languedoc in addition to the towns that were renowned for either their fairs (such as Pézenas) or their financial activity (like Montpellier). In 1461, her son Louis XI increased her dower to 50,000 livres tournois thanks to income earned from various towns in the regions of Languedoc and Saintonge.

A Christian Ritual

'What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder' (Matthew 9:6; Mark 10:9). Based on this phrase in the Gospels, the church firmly asserted the principle of the indissolubility of marriage, upon which Saint Augustine also commented. The evolution of the meaning given to the *sacramentum* that bound husband and wife together and which resulted in the inclusion of marriage among the sacraments at the end of the twelfth century led to an even stronger reassertion of this.[36]

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[34] Jean-Marc Cazilhac, 'Le douaire de la Reine de France à la fin du Moyen Âge', in *Reines et princesses au Moyen Âge* (Montpellier: CRISIMA, 2001), 75–86.

[35] Bernard Chevalier, 'Marie d'Anjou, une reine sans gloire, 1404-1463', in *Autour de Marguerite d'Écosse. Reines, princesses et dames du XV siècle,* eds. Geneviève and Philippe Contamine (Paris: H. Champion, 1999), 89.

Canonical law nonetheless anticipated cases of annulment, primarily those linked to carnal or spiritual kinship (a relationship through, for example, godparents). Future brides and grooms were thus careful to obtain the necessary dispensations from the papacy. These were easily granted, since pontiffs could hardly refuse dispensations for marital alliances that were meant to favor peace within the Christian world.[37] In 1234, Pope Gregory IX had already released Louis IX and Margaret of Provence, relatives of the fourth degree, from the obstacle presented by their consanguinity.[38] This was also the case for Charles VIII and Anne of Brittany, who were cousins of the fourth degree. While they celebrated their engagement on 17 November 1491, an ambassador left for Rome in order to obtain the necessary dispensation.[39] For some unions, such as those of Philip IV and Joan of Navarre or Philip VI and Joan of Burgundy, even the restriction against marriage between relatives of the second degree had to be withdrawn.[40]

Beyond the engagement celebration (permitted as early as the age of seven) and the signing of the contract sealing the future union, marriage could only take place once the young girl had reached the legal age of 12 years old. While Philip IV and Joan of Navarre's union was negotiated in 1274, their marriage was held ten years later when she reached the age of 'majority' (after 11 full years).

When a young princess arrived at court, it was common practice to ensure that she was not handicapped in any way and could bear the children of France. When Margaret of Austria, who was betrothed to the future Charles VIII, came to the kingdom of France in 1483, Louis XI's daughter Anne of Beaujeu, the future governess Madame de Segré and a few other women proceeded to submit the young girl to a thorough gynecological examination during which she was fully undressed.

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[36] Emmanuelle Santinelli, 'Introduction', in *Répudiation, séparation, divorce dans l'Occident médiéval*, ed. Emmanuelle Santinelli (Valenciennes: Presses Universitaires de Valenciennes, 2007), 11.

[37] Allirot, 'Les mariages royaux', 237.

[38] Jacques Le Goff, *Saint Louis* (Paris: Gallimard, 1996), 131.

[39] Le Fur, *Charles VIII*, 220.

[40] Allirot, 'Les mariages royaux', 237.

To everyone's reassurance, she was in good health and was presumed to be well developed.[41]

Olivier de la Marche's beautiful and highly detailed account of the wedding of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, and Margaret of York attests to the standardization of rites surrounding the couple's first encounters.[42] The future husband and wife met for the first time in Sluys on Saturday, 25 June 1468. Prior to this, during a royal council in London, the princess, who was Edward IV's sister, had agreed that the marriage should be concluded (though it is true that she had a limited choice in the matter). This initial encounter, which served as the setting for the engagement ceremony, unfolded in the semi-public space of Margaret's chamber. Both of the protagonists' behavior respected the usual formalities. Among the obligatory stages in the process, the duke gazed at his betrothed in contemplation, and there were displays of reverence and words exchanged in private. One of the members of court then asked the duke to formally celebrate the engagement in order to 'show his good affection' toward Margaret, the woman he had 'so looked for and desired'. Charles asked his future wife for her consent, to which she agreed.

The nuptial ceremony, which was a Christian ritual, unfolded in a number of stages. The major step took place on the threshold of the church—in other words, outside. For a long time, marriage was only a private contract before becoming a sacrament at the end of the twelfth century.[43] The celebration outdoors also made it possible to make the marriage public one last time (following the publication of the banns, which the Fourth Lateran Council made obligatory in 1215). Those present were asked for the final time if they knew of any reason to stop the marriage from taking place.

After verification that the bride and groom were able to give their free consent came the essential gesture: the joining of right hands, which sanctioned the couple's religious commitment and conjugal pact. Jan Van Eyck painted this very moment—the joining of hands—of the marriage ceremony in his famous *Arnolfini Portrait* (1434). The painting, which is

[41] Le Fur, *Charles VIII*, 48.

[42] *Mémoires d'Olivier de la Marche, maître d'hôtel et capitaine des gardes de Charles le Téméraire*, eds. Henri Beaune and J. d'Arbaumont (Paris: Renouard, 1883-1888), 4:95–144; Manuel Guay, 'Du consentement à l'*affectio maritalis.* Quatre mariages princiers (France-Angleterre, 1395-1468)', *Revue Historique* 650, no. 2 (2009): 313–16; and Geneviève Ribordy, 'Les fiançailles dans le rituel matrimonial de la noblesse française à la fin du Moyen Âge : tradition laïque ou création ecclésiastique', *Revue Historique* 303 (2001): 885–912.

[43] D'Avray, *Medieval Marriage*.

held at the National Gallery in London, depicts a couple in the intimacy of their bedchamber and commemorates a marriage that the painter apparently witnessed. The rings were exchanged after having been blessed. The ceremony for the union of Louis IX and Margaret of Provence in 1234, recounted in the sources, makes it possible to have a more accurate idea of the acts that were accomplished and the words that were spoken on such an occasion.[44] Invoking the Holy Spirit, the Archbishop of Sens blessed and censed the ring before handing it to the king, who placed it on the digits of Margaret's right hand: first on the thumb, saying, 'In the name of the Father'; then on the index finger, continuing with the words 'and the Son'; and finally on the middle finger, finishing with 'and the Holy Spirit, Amen'.

The couple next entered the sanctuary carrying lit candles and making their way toward the altar, where more prayers wishing them well were uttered before mass was celebrated (which was not obligatory in the Christian ritual).

The transition to the conjugal state ended in the nuptial bedchamber. The room was first blessed by the officiant before the royal couple lay down on the bed, a rite of fertility that emphasized the procreative purpose of marriage. The 'wedding night'—or consummation of the marriage—then took place, which experts were sent to verify soon after. Charles VIII and Anne of Brittany's marriage was consummated on the night of their wedding (1491). The report released by the burghers of Rennes tasked with certifying this provided an account: 'Last Tuesday, in Langlois [Langeais], was done the espousal of the king and the queen, our sovereign lady, and on the night of this very day, in Langlois, they slept together and there she left him her virginity … . We wanted to inform you so that general processions, fires and all things pious thanking God could be held.'[45]

Matrimonial Splendor

The royal wedding was accompanied by the exchange of precious gifts. Jewels, pieces of orfevrerie, cloths of gold and books were offered by the bride's father as part of or in addition to the dowry. These trousseaux were extremely expensive. For the wedding of John II's daughter Joan and Charles, King of Navarre, in 1352, for example, robes, furs, tableware and chests were purchased for a total of over 7,000 livres parisis.[46]

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[44] Le Goff, *Saint Louis*, 134.

[45] 'Mardi dernier, à Langlois [Langeais], furent faictes les espousailles du roy et de la royne, nostre souveraine dame et la nuyt d'iceluy jour, audit Langlois, couchèrent ensemble et là lessa la royne son pucellage … . Nous avons bien voulu vous en avertir affin que faictes faire processions generalles, feuz et toutes choses pieuses en regraciant Dieu.' Le Fur, *Charles VIII*, 226.

The bride's gown, which was an integral part of the matrimonial splendor, was made of fabric embroidered with gold and sometimes embellished with pearls and precious stones. However, there was not yet a specific 'royal' gown, as would later be the case beginning in the mid-sixteenth century (the ermine surcoat and great blue cloak).[47] The queens of foreign houses were allowed to wear the traditional dresses of their native countries.[48] For her first encounter with Charles VI, Isabeau of Bavaria's appearance, deemed too simple, was nonetheless modified. The Duchess of Hainaut ended up dressing her in the 'French style' in a silk gown embroidered with gold.[49]

For such celebrations, the select audience included prelates, princes of the blood, great noblemen, princesses and ladies of the court. The following people were among those present at the marriage of Charles VI and Isabeau of Bavaria in Amiens in 1385: Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy; John of Burgundy; Duke Albert of Bavaria; the bride's uncle Frederick of Bavaria; Guillaume, Duke of Hainaut and his wife Margaret; Margaret of Flanders, Duchess of Burgundy; and Joan, Duchess of Brabant, in addition to a number of barons, knights and noblewomen.[50]

The festivities unfolded in the form of banquets, balls and tournaments. In 1302, the wedding of Philip IV's daughter Isabella and Edward II was the occasion of celebrations bringing together French and English barons in Boulogne-sur-Mer. They all confronted each other during a great tournament where 'many lances' were broken.[51]

Still, not all royal marriages shone with splendor. Those celebrated during the first half of the fourteenth century were actually rather discreet. The wedding of Louis X and Clementia of Hungary, for example, attracted the attention of chroniclers for being brief and relatively sober. The official reason given for this was that the king was in a hurry to reach Flanders. More importantly, this was a remarriage following the scandal provoked by the adulterous relations of the king's first wife Margaret of Burgundy.

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[46] Allirot, 'Les mariages royaux', 241.

[47] Monique Chatenet, 'Habits de cérémonie : les mariages à la cour des Valois', in *Femmes et pouvoir politique*, 220–21.

[48] Fanny Cosandey, *La reine de France. Symbole et pouvoir* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000), 171–72.

[49] Autrand, *Charles VI*, 158.

[50] Jean Verdon, *Isabeau de Bavière. La Mal-Aimée* (Paris: Tallandier, 2001), 31.

[51] Allirot, 'Les mariages royaux', 234.

Beyond such contingencies, marriages were never part of the large political ceremonies that developed under the Valois monarchy. While entry ceremonies and funerals took place in public, royal weddings were celebrated in the palatine chapel in the sole company of those at court and often with the most utter discretion. In 1491, the wedding of Charles VIII and Anne of Brittany was celebrated in the great hall of the Castle of Langeais in the presence of Breton lords and princes of the blood, such as Louis II of Orleans and Peter of Bourbon. However, the ambassadors in attendance were surprised by the lack of splendor.[52] This had nothing to do with the type of Burgundian exuberance displayed, for example, at the memorable wedding of Charles the Bold and Margaret of York in Bruges on Sunday, 3 July 1468. The ceremonies following the latter wedding had lasted for nine days and included the duchess's entry in Bruges, banquets, feasts and jousting matches.

This was not specific to marriages. During the fifteenth century, the court of Burgundy was the most lavish, the most inventive and also the most visible, magnified by important chroniclers and historiographers, such as Olivier de la Marche.[53] The court of France was rather pale in comparison. Charles VII—either due to his temperament, his lack of resources (which, at the time, were directed at his war efforts) or his desire to be different from Burgundy—had a relatively modest court that, for political reasons, had long been distanced from Paris, which was the heart of the kingdom and an important curial center. Withdrawal from the capital in the Loire Valley was part of this discretion, at least in the beginning. Similarly, Louis XI, despite his considerable financial resources, deliberately kept himself distanced from the major ceremonial displays of courtly society. Royal marriages did not again become large celebrations until the sixteenth century.

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[52] Le Fur, *Charles VIII*, 224.

[53] Philippe Contamine, 'Préface', in *La Cour du Prince*, 8–10.

Love and Separation: The Royal Couple

Conjugal Affection

According to the instructions in the *miroirs*, the woman owed her husband complete obedience. Christine de Pizan herself acknowledged that a princess, like every wife, should obey without uttering a word.[54] She gave practical advice on how young couples could maintain the love they owed each other, such as speaking to each other with sweet and loving words, exchanging gifts, and seeking to always please each other.

Beyond theory, however, what were the relationships between royal couples really like? It is difficult to offer a clear opinion on the affection sovereigns had for one other, since the sources—mostly chronicles—are either extremely stereotypical (emphasizing the necessary conjugal love that was indispensable for a couple to live together harmoniously) or extremely partisan. Certain chroniclers thus enjoyed highlighting the indifference—and even hatred—that Louis XI showed his wife Charlotte of Savoy, suspicious of the ties she had maintained to her family and native duchy.[55] He had married her for her dowry but not, according to Philippe de Commynes in the following extract, for her beauty:

> He was not involved with ladies during the period that I was with him, for at the time of my arrival he lost a son, which caused him great sorrow, and then he made a vow to God in my presence never to touch any woman except the queen his wife. This was no more than what he should have done, of course, according to the laws of matrimony, but it still was particularly commendable to have had so much will power as to persevere so firmly in this promise, especially considering that the queen was not the kind of person in whom one might take great pleasure, although she was a good lady.[56]

Charlotte of Savoy properly played the role of queen, giving the kingdom children (six in all, though only three survived, including a son: the future Charles VIII). She also participated in the important ceremonies throughout her reign, including entry ceremonies in cities and receptions for princes and ambassadors.

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[54] *A Medieval Woman's Mirror of Honor: The Treasury of the City of Ladies*, 98–99.

[55] Murielle Gaude-Ferragu, '*L'honneur de la reine* : la mort et les funérailles de Charlotte de Savoie (1er-14 décembre 1483)', *Revue Historique* 652 (2010): 779–804.

[56] Samuel Kinser, ed., *The Memoirs of Philippe de Commynes*, trans. Isabelle Cazeaux (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1973), 425.

However, husband and wife mostly lived apart, with the king in Plessis-les-Tours and Charlotte at the Castle of Amboise with her children, far from the court and its supposed splendor. Nicolas de' Roberti, an Italian ambassador visiting the Touraine region, even commented on her rather poor equipage (two chariots and 12 horsemen), which he felt did not suit her rank.[57] Such words should not be taken as complete truth, however, since historiographers deliberately made her living conditions sound bleak in order to stigmatize the reprehensible behavior of her husband, who had no consideration for her. This image was made popular, especially by Brantôme: 'Thus, he only loved her in order to have descendants … . He kept her at the Castle of Amboise like a simple lady, in a modest state and as poorly dressed as a simple damsel.'[58]

This judgment should, in fact, be nuanced. Indeed, the authoritarian and unyielding Louis XI was undoubtedly a difficult husband. One anecdote is particularly revealing when it comes to the couple's relationship. When one of their daughters, Joan, was born crippled with a club foot and a hunchback, he quickly had her removed from court and resettled far away in the Berry region.[59] Charlotte had no choice but to accept this exile, but as soon as the king died (30 August 1483), she called for her daughter's return. Nonetheless, contrary to historiographical assertions, Louis XI never had the queen living in destitution. She had an *hôtel* comprised of approximately 130 servants and a yearly pension of over 32,000 livres.

Other couples offered the image of perfect harmony, at least according to the chroniclers. In her panegyric in honor of Charles V, Christine de Pizan insisted upon the king's grief at the death of his wife Joan of Bourbon (February 1378), whom he had dearly loved: 'It is true that the king wanted everything to be marked by the greatest solemnity, for he wanted to pay a final tribute to the woman who had been his loyal companion and wife, the woman who had given him so many beautiful children, the woman he had tenderly loved and the woman who had loved him.'[60] Such words should undoubtedly not be taken literally, since displays of grief were part of the usual rhetoric of loss and mourning.[61] The sovereign's conjugal life had not always been a straightforward one. The couple had had considerable trouble conceiving an heir. The queen first had two daughters, Joan and Bonne, who both died in quick succession at the end of 1360. They then had to wait six years before another child was born.[62] Joan was born on 7 June 1366, and died in December of the same year. After another two years, a new child was announced: a son, the Dauphin Charles was born on 6 December 1368, and would later become the mad king known to his people as Charles the Beloved. The fact that husband and wife were so closely related probably played a role in his illness. Some held the queen directly responsible, since she was said to have been subject to passing bouts of madness. But one should be wary of such accusations, since numerous clues attest to Charles V's immense trust in her, particularly the role he granted her in the event of her regency (she obtained tutelage of the children of France in 1374). He also promoted her both artistically and ceremonially, systematically highlighting the figure of the queen—which confirms how important he considered her to be and perhaps attests to his affection for her.

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[57] Alfred Gandilhon, 'Contribution à l'histoire de la vie privée et de la cour de Louis XI (1423-1491)', *Mémoires de la Société Historique, Littéraire et Scientifique du Cher* 20 (1905): 377, note 1.

[58] 'Aussi ne l'ayma-il jamais que pour en avoir lignée … . Il la tenoit au chasteau d'Amboise comme une simple dame, portant fort petit estat et aussi mal habillée que simple damoiselle.' Pierre de Bourdeille, seigneur de Brantôme, *Œuvres complètes*, ed. Ludovic Lalanne (Paris: Renouard, 1876), n° IX, 470.

[59] René de Maulde La Clavière, *Jeanne de France, duchesse d'Orléans et de Berry (1464-1505)* (Paris: H. Champion, 1883), 48.

While passionate love did not exist in the marriages of reason that royal unions represented, *affectio maritalis* was often very much present, born of a deep and lasting relationship between two people who shared common values and areas of interest. In the church's view, this 'affection' naturally stemmed from the couple's consent, which was necessary for validating their marriage. It appears that Philip IV's affection for his wife Joan of Navarre had long been sincere. He showered her with graces and favors, naming her, in October 1294, regent of the kingdom in the event of his death before his son reached maturity. As for the queen, she often accompanied her husband during his travels, and even in war.[63] Although some tension subsequently kept them at odds with one another, Philip was very upset when Joan died in 1305, not only out of what was undoubtedly true affection for her but also because this reminded him of his own demise. So many centuries later, however, it is difficult to establish the king's state of mind, and one should be wary of the chroniclers' accounts.[64]

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[60] Christine de Pizan, *Le Livre des Faits et Bonnes Mœurs du roi Charles V le Sage*, eds. Eric Hicks and Thérèse Moreau (Paris: Stock, 1997), 281.

[61] Charles Kiening, 'La rhétorique de la perte : la mort d'Isabelle de Bourbon en 1465', *Médiévales* 27 (1994): 15–24.

[62] Françoise Autrand, *Charles V* (Paris: Fayard, 1994), 808.

[63] Elisabeth A.R. Brown, 'La mort, les testaments et les fondations de Jeanne de Navarre, reine de France (1273-1305)', in *Une histoire pour un royaume (XII^{e}-XV^{e} siècle) (*Paris: Perrin, 2010), 127–28.

This is not the case for the accounting series, which attests to the real conjugal difficulties Isabeau of Bavaria encountered: while her early years as a couple with Charles VI appear to have been happy, on a number of occasions the queen had to endure the episodic violence of a mad king who was unable to control his acts and behavior. During such outbursts, he often destroyed any object on hand, which would eventually have to be repaired (that the accounts show). His aggression affected everyone in his entourage, especially the queen.[65] With Isabeau's consent, it was deemed preferable to provide him with a mistress.

The Age of Mistresses

All—or nearly all—of the sovereigns had mistresses. On the one hand, amorous relationships and conjugal relationships were considered two separate entities; on the other, affairs seemed to be part of the king's profession, attesting to his strength and virility as a monarch. Of course, Louis IX did not have any, which chroniclers and hagiographers stress was a remarkable exception and in keeping with the Holy King's admirable virtue.[66]

The other kings had multiple affairs, without necessarily granting their many mistresses official positions. As a young man, Charles VI was known for his love of hunting, games, good food and especially women, for which his former tutor reproached him. In *Le Songe du Vieil Pèlerin*, written in 1389, Philippe de Mézières begged him to limit his adventures in order to devote himself to his wife.[67]

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[64] Elisabeth A.R. Brown, 'The Prince is Father of the King: The Character and Childhood of Philip IV of France', *Mediaeval Studies* 49 (1987): 282–334.

[65] Yann Grandeau, 'Isabeau de Bavière ou l'amour conjugal', in *Études de la sensibilité au Moyen Âge*, Actes du 102e Congrès national des sociétés savantes (Paris: CTHS, 1979), 2:117–48.

[66] Le Goff, *Saint Louis*, 122.

[67] Philippe de Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieux Pèlerin*, ed. Joël Blanchard (Paris: Pocket, 2008), 24; de Mézières, *Le Songe du Viell Pèlerin*, ed. G.-W. Coopland (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969).

These affairs led to a number of illegitimate children. In the early fourteenth century, Louis X had a natural daughter, Eudeline, who subsequently joined the Order of Saint Claire. On 10 August 1330, a breve from Pope John XXII congratulated the young woman for having, by her virtue, erased the 'stain of her birth': being born not out of a legitimate union, but out of a 'criminal exchange' between the late king and a married woman.[68]

During the fifteenth century, two favorite mistresses emerged from the shadows and were granted official positions at court. One, Odette de Champdivers, only owed her position to Charles VI's bouts of madness, while the other, Agnès Sorel, was the first official royal mistress. In 1405, in order to shield Isabeau from her husband's episodes of violence, it was decided that he should have a mistress, Odette de Champdivers, a young noblewoman from Burgundy: 'He had been given as a concubine a beautiful, gracious and charming young person, who was the daughter of a horse dealer. This was done with the queen's consent, which seemed rather strange. But when she pondered the troubles that threatened her and the violence and ill treatment she had endured with the king, the thought that it was better to choose the lesser of two inconveniences made her resign herself to this sacrifice.'[69]

Known as the 'Little Queen' (*la petite reine*), de Champdivers carried out her delicate task with devotion and loyalty and was richly rewarded for it. She was given two beautiful manors along with all their dependencies, respectively situated in Créteil and Bagnolet.

However, the first truly official mistress of the King of France was Agnès Sorel. From 1444 to 1450, she occupied a dominant place at court, eclipsing Queen Marie of Anjou—to whom she was one of the ladies-in-waiting. She also had considerable influence over Charles VII. All the accounts at the time agree that she was exceptionally beautiful and charming. Her portrait has been passed on in the famous diptych of Melun, which was long kept at the Collegiate Church of Notre-Dame. In it, Jean Fouquet depicts Sorel as the Virgin Mary offering her exposed breast to the Infant Jesus (c. 1452-1455).[70] Étienne Chevalier, the Treasurer of France who ordered the commission, probably had to have Charles VII's approval in order to be shown in a holy setting praying before the effigy of the beautiful Agnès as the Virgin Mary. Born in 1422, the 'Lady of Beauty' (*Dame de Beauté*), who was from a Picard family of lesser nobility, first entered into the service of the House of Anjou as a lady-in-waiting to Isabella of Lorraine, King René of Anjou's wife, before being noticed by Charles VII and becoming his favorite mistress. She eventually bore him four daughters. She knew how to use her influence over the sovereign, imposing her close relatives in positions at court or obtaining the royal advisors' favor. The king granted her numerous domains, such as those at Beauté-sur-Marne and Loches, where she had a castle built overlooking the town. She died in February 1450 at the age of 28, following her fourth childbirth and an excessive dose of mercury.[71] Attesting to his admiration for and loyalty to this exceptional woman, Charles VII had two magnificent tombs erected, one at Notre-Dame de Loches for her body and the other at the Abbey of Jumièges for her heart.

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[68] Allirot, 'Filles de roy de France', 313.

[69] *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denys*, 3:487.

[70] Museum of Anvers. *Jean Fouquet, peintre et enlumineur*, 121–29.

Her official role, which was unique in the fifteenth century, provoked much criticism, as the *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris* attests: in 1448, 'came to Paris a damoiselle, who was said to publicly be a friend of the King of France, without faith and without law and without truth to the good queen he had married, and it appears that she led a life as great as that of a countess or duchess. … Alas! What a pity, when the head of the kingdom gives his people such a poor example'.[72]

Beginning with the reign of Francis I, the positions of the favorite mistresses at court continued to be reinforced, their names sometimes eclipsing those of the queens (Diane de Poitiers, Gabrielle d'Estrées, Madame de Pompadour and so on). The royal mistress thus became a dignitary, with her own rites and protocol.

Annulment, Repudiation and Divorce

The study of royal unions poses the problem of their eventual annulment. Indeed, although divorce did not exist in the Middle Ages (the church having imposed the principle of the indissolubility of Christian marriage), canonical law introduced the concept of annulment, which some princes used to repudiate their wives. According to this, a marriage could be annulled (meaning considered to have never taken place) on account of the discovery—sometimes many years after the nuptial ceremony—of the illegitimate or illicit nature of the union.[73] The cases provided for by the law were linked to restrictions related to kinship between husband and wife (such as unions between relatives up to four degrees of consanguinity), between close allies and between spiritual parents (godfathers and godmothers). The law also envisaged the issue of a marriage breaking up in the event that it had never been consummated, which formed another cause for annulment.[74]

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[71] Charlier, *Médecin des morts*, 17–37.

[72] 'Vint à Paris une damoiselle, laquelle on disait être amie publiquement au roi de France, sans foi et sans loi et sans vérité à la bonne reine qu'il avait épousée, et bien y apparaît qu'elle menait aussi grand état comme une comtesse ou duchesse. … Hélas ! quelle pitié, quand le chef du royaume donne si malle [mauvais] exemple à son peuple.' *Journal d'un bourgeois de Paris*, ed. Colette Beaune (Paris: Lettres gothiques, 1990), 438–39.

According to some authors, separations were more frequent in the royal world, a specificity linked to the affairs of the kingdom (necessary shifts in alliance) or the lack of a male heir. Thus, the church allegedly had an easier time turning a blind eye to such repudiations and would in such cases sometimes pronounce an annulment due to the ban on consanguinity. Indeed, Louis VII's divorce from Eleanor of Aquitaine in 1152 was justified years after their marriage by the king's convenient discovery that he was related to his wife by consanguinity. Some observers suspected an adulterous affair and primarily the lack of a male heir as causes (the queen had just given birth to her third daughter).

During the Late Middle Ages, however, such repudiations were far from frequent. Beginning with Innocent III's pontificate (1198-1216), annulments indeed became more difficult to obtain.[75] Sovereigns hesitated before initiating such proceedings, so strongly were they reminded of the conflict that opposed Philip August and the papacy over the repudiation of his wife Ingeborg of Denmark. He had married her in 1193, and the wedding night had been a disaster. The very next day, the king dismissed her from the throne and undertook legal proceedings to separate from her. However, both the queen's and Innocent III's pugnacity had not been taken into account. The kingdom was interdicted in 1200. Ingeborg was finally publicly acknowledged Queen of France 20 years after she was crowned.

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[73] Santinelli, 'Introduction', in *Répudiation, séparation, divorce*, 11.

[74] Brigitte Basdevant-Gaudemet, 'Le principe de l'indissolubilité du mariage et les difficultés de son application pratique', in *La femme au Moyen Âge* (Paris: La Documentation française, 1992), 40–41.

[75] On divorces, see David d'Avray*, Dissolving Royal Marriages: A Documentary History, 860-1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014). And David d'Avray, *Papacy, monarchy and marriage, 860-1600* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2015).

Repudiation could also have drastic territorial and diplomatic consequences. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, only two royal marriages ended in annulment: that of Charles IV and Blanche of Burgundy and that of Louis XII and Joan of France.

The pope's 1322 declaration of the annulment of Charles IV and Blanche of Burgundy's marriage followed Blanche's adultery, which had been revealed eight years before.[76] The story is well known and the starting point for Maurice Druon's saga of the 'accursed kings'.[77] In 1314, a major scandal rocked the court of France: the adulterous affairs of Philip IV the Fair's daughters-in-law Margaret and Blanche of Burgundy, the respective wives of the future Louis X and the future Charles IV. These young and attractive women had taken esquires for lovers, the brothers Philippe and Gautier d'Aunay, whom they met in secret at the famous Tower of Nesle. Scandal erupted in the spring of 1314, perhaps after they were denounced by their sister-in-law Isabella, who was the wife of Edward II, King of England. Horrified, Philip IV reacted immediately, having the d'Aunay brothers arrested and tortured. They soon confessed. Condemned to death shortly thereafter, they were executed in Pontoise using the most extreme methods of cruelty. They were drawn and quartered, flayed alive, and castrated, and their bodies were hung in the gallows after having been dragged through the streets. During this time, both princesses were judged by a court of law and sentenced to be imprisoned for life. Their hair was shorn, and they were dressed in coarse woolen gowns and humiliated before being imprisoned in the fortress of Château-Gaillard. Margaret was placed in an open cell at the top of the tower that was exposed to the wind and died a year later—either of cold or of strangulation following Louis X's orders, depending on the accounts. Blanche was imprisoned in a less exposed chamber two floors below. Her stay lasted for many years. She was still there in 1322, when proceedings for the annulment of her marriage began.

As early as 1318, her husband, Charles of La Marche, had written to the pope to request that his marriage be annulled, but in vain. He had to be content with his wife's sentence. On 2 January 1322, however, the death of his brother—who had no male heir—and his accession to the throne altered the situation. Since the new sovereign had to ensure his succession, he made a new request for annulment. Blanche's adultery was not a sufficient reason for him to remarry. Neither could he pretend that their marriage had not been consummated, since the couple had had at least three children since 1314. Following an investigation and trial, on 19 May 1322, John XXII finally granted Charles IV the dissolution of his marriage on the grounds of spiritual kinship, Blanche's mother Mahaut of Artois being his godmother.[78]

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[76] Olivier Canteaut, 'L'annulation du mariage de Charles IV et de Blanche de Bourgogne: une affaire d'État ?', in *Répudiation, séparation, divorce*, 309–27.

[77] Maurice Druon, *The Accursed Kings*, book 1, *The Iron King*, trans. Humphrey Hare (London: Harper, 2013; first published 1955).

A century later, another trial for the annulment of a marriage was the topic of much discussion: that of Louis XII and Joan of France. The princess, who was the daughter of Louis XI and Charlotte of Savoy, had been born crippled and had been exiled by her father to the Berry region.[79] In 1476, the sovereign wanted to give her in marriage to Louis, Duke of Orleans, who had no choice but to comply. Once he became king in 1498, however, Louis did everything he could to have this union annulled, especially since the territorial interests of the kingdom were at stake. He wanted to marry Anne, heiress to the duchy of Brittany, in accordance with the clause stated in the Treaty of 1491.

The trial for the dissolution of his marriage began in August 1498. The usual arguments of spiritual (Louis XII was Louis XI's godson) and carnal (consanguinity of the fourth degree) kinship were advanced. The king's prosecutor also asserted the lack of consent to such a union, stating that it was 'necessary, for the good of the kingdom and in order to have a successor' that Louis XII obtain the dissolution of his marriage to someone who was 'imperfect, polluted and hexed in body, unfit for commerce with a man'.[80] Joan of France defended herself, maintaining that the marriage had indeed been consummated and that she had no physical defect preventing this. As a daughter of France, however, she refused to be subjected to a physical examination in order to verify her claim. The king eventually obtained the annulment on 17 December.

During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the sovereign was thus careful to choose his future wife from among the highest-ranking French and foreign princesses, who lent him additional prestige and power through the alliances that were established, their royal blood and the lands they brought with them. The ritual of marriage, an royal ceremony oscillating between splendor and discretion, united a couple that became indissoluble in both life and death. From the mid-fourteenth century onward, royal couples would be depicted in the stonework of monuments, silken paraments (the *Parement de Narbonne*)[81] and seal matrices (the seal of the Treasurer of the Sainte-Chapelle on a document from 1386).[82] It appears that Joan of Évreux initiated the monumentalization of the royal couple. In 1353, she had herself depicted beside her late husband Charles IV in the stonework at the Church of the Grands Carmes in Paris, the building she had partially financed.[83] The iconography displayed her patronage. One of the Gothic portals (the Portal of the Virgin) was framed by two pilasters bearing statues of the queen and Charles IV praying before the statue of the Virgin Mary, located on the central trumeau. Charles V further developed this new way of publicly presenting royalty as embodied by two people. On the facades of chapels and churches (such as that of the Celestines in Paris) as well as on palace doors (such as the Louvre[84] or the Hôtel Saint-Pol) he commissioned representations, not of the king by himself, but of the royal couple (Charles V and Joan of Bourbon). The queen's image was thus highlighted. She appeared as a projection of her husband's public and political body.

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[78] Canteaut, 'L'annulation du mariage', 14–320; d'Avray, *Papacy, monarchy and marriage*, 111.

[79] Maulde La Clavière, *Jeanne de France*, 48; Bernard Quilliet, *Louis XII* (Paris: Fayard, 1986), 70–71.

[80] Ibid.

Princes of the blood in turn maintained the dual representation of the royal couple. The well-known statues of the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy on display at the portal of the Chartreuse of Champmol are such an example. On the trumeau, there is a Virgin and Child with Margaret of Male kneeling on the right and Philip the Bold praying on the left. After all, the 'lord's *hôtel* is worth nothing without a lady'.[85] This phrase, uttered by John of Berry during his second wedding, is just as relevant for the king and his wife as for the lord and his lady. One ceremony, however, set the royal couple apart from all others and distinguished the queen from all other women by granting her an exceptional status: the coronation.

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[81] *Charles V et Jeanne de Bourbon*, by Jean d'Orléans, 1375-1378, Paris, Louvre Museum.

[82] Moulage (D 7732), Archives Nationales (hereafter referred to as 'AN'), Paris.

[83] Carla Lord, 'Jeanne d'Évreux as a Founder of Chapels: Patronage and Public Piety', in *Women and Art in Early Modern Europe: Patrons, Collectors and Connoisseurs*, ed. C. Lawrence (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 33.

[84] *Charles V et Jeanne de Bourbon*, by Jean de Saint-Romain ?, 1370, Paris, Louvre Museum.

[85] 'Hôtel de seigneur ne vaut rien sans dame.' Françoise Autrand, ' "Hôtel de seigneur ne vaut rien sans dame" : le mariage de Jean, comte de Poitiers et de Jeanne d'Armagnac, 24 juin 1360', in *Guerre, pouvoir et noblesse au Moyen Âge, Mélanges en l'honneur de Philippe Contamine*, eds. Jacques Paviot and Jacques Verger (Paris: Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 2000), 51–61.

Chapter 2: Marrying the Monarchy: The Queen's Coronation

Marriage certainly made the queen, with both charters and other political documents immediately giving her the title. Yet for a long time, only one ceremony was constitutive of her power: the coronation. Far from being a fourteenth- and fifteenth-century invention, the anointing of the queen dated back many centuries, the first princess to have been anointed being Charles the Bald's wife Ermentrude in the ninth century—one century after the first royal coronation (that of Pepin the Short in 751). The sanctity of the kings of France was not inherent, as it was in ancient Egypt, where the pharaoh was considered an earthly god. Sacredness was bestowed on the king during the anointing, which was carried out using the Holy Ampoule of divine origin.[1] As a pivotal rite between the religious and the political, the coronation inaugurated the sovereign's reign and established the legitimacy of power and the royal succession. It also made manifest his election by God and endowed him with thaumaturgical powers. As soon as the ceremony was over, he would touch the skin of those sick with scrofula, waiting to be healed by him.[2] As for the female sovereign, who was not consecrated with the Holy Chrism, she did not have

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[1] Jacques Le Goff et al., *Le sacre royal à l'époque de saint Louis d'après le manuscrit latin 1246 de la BnF* (Paris: Gallimard, 2001).

[2] Marc Bloch, *Les rois thaumaturges : études sur le caractère surnaturel attribué à la puissance royale particulièrement en France et en Angleterre* (Paris: Gallimard, 1961).

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the same miraculous power, although her anointing still provided her with a special status.

THE BODY IN ALL ITS MAJESTY: THE CORONATION OF JOAN OF BOURBON

The coronation ritual of the queens of France is well known thanks to *ordines*, liturgical works composed of prayers, hymns and chants in which, following a description of the ceremony reserved for kings, a few pages were devoted to his wife. Saint Louis attached a great deal of importance to the royal coronation, and two *ordines* were written during his reign, one in the 1260s and the other around 1270 (named the 'Last Capetian *Ordo*'). The latter was used for subsequent coronations, particularly for that of Joan of Évreux in 1326.[3]

A century later (in 1365), Charles V had a new and ornately illuminated *ordo* composed to commemorate the coronation of the king and his wife Joan of Bourbon, which had been celebrated the year before on 19 May 1364.[4] It was comprised of a number of additional liturgies that were important for both the king (with an almost obsessive emphasis on the divine origin of the monarchy, its victory over its enemies and the kingdom's peace) and the queen, incorporating prayers destined to favor her fertility—for the couple had not yet had an heir.[5] Completing this text is the useful political and symbolic commentary by the Carmelite Jean Golein, who was asked by Charles V to write a *Traité du sacre* (c. 1372).[6]

In the *ordines*, the crowning of the queen was jointly described with the king's coronation. Husband and wife, who were often married before acceding to the throne, were crowned during the same ceremony, which was traditionally held on a Sunday in Reims, where Clovis had been baptized. The cathedral was decorated for the occasion, covered with tapestries, wall hangings and carpets. The focal point was the altar, where the royal insignia were placed and the couple was anointed as close as possible to the divine mystery.

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[3] Le Goff et al., *Le sacre royal*, 16.

[4] London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius B. VIII; Edward Samuel Dewick, 'The Coronation Book of Charles V', *Henry Bradshaw Society* 16 (1899).

[5] Claire Ritcher-Sherman, 'The Queen in Charles V's Coronation Book: Jeanne de Bourbon and the *Ordo ad reginam benedicendam*', *Viator* 8 (1977): 260–68; Carra Ferguson O'Meara, *Monarchy and Consent: The Coronation Book of Charles V of France: British Library, Cotton Ms Tiberius B. VIII* (London: Harvey Miller Publisher, 2001), 152–79; Richard A. Jackson, 'Les *ordines* des couronnements royaux au Moyen Âge', in *Le sacre des rois* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1985), 70; Richard Jackson, *Vivat Rex. Histoire des sacres et couronnements en France, 1364-1825* (Paris: Ophrys, 1984) 31–37; and János M. Bak, ed., *Coronations: Medieval and Early Modern Monarchic Ritual* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

[6] Jean Golein, *The Traité du Sacre of Jean Golein*, ed. Richard A. Jackson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1969).

The queen was not consecrated until after the king, once all the important moments of the monarchical ceremonial (sermons, 'accolade' of the 'king-knight', anointing, crowning and enthroning) were completed. In order to understand how these events unfolded, it is necessary to spend a few moments examining the magnificent illuminations decorating Charles V's *ordo*, nine of which are devoted to Joan of Bourbon (there were originally 11 full-page illuminations and dropped initials) and which present an exceptional series attesting—if further evidence is needed—to the importance accorded to the queen's coronation.[7] The event took place on Trinity Sunday (19 May) in Reims, in 1364. Like her precursors, Joan arrived with her hair unbound (whereas women usually wore headdresses in daily life), symbolizing virginity (the Virgin Mary was represented in this way) and fertility. She was dressed in a gown, a tunic and a blouse laced at the chest and easily undone for the anointing. Her whole outfit was in red silk, the royal color.[8] She entered the cathedral not through the front door, like her husband, but through the side portal, surrounded by a cortège composed of two bishops and two princesses who accompanied her before the consecrating prelate, the Archbishop of Reims Jean de Craon. He blessed her before reciting a few prayers in her honor. At this point, the rite of unction was performed on her head and her chest using sanctified oil, offering the female applicant spiritual renewal.

The *regalia* ceremony was an equally important moment. The archbishop first placed a ring on Joan of Bourbon's finger, a traditional symbol of Christian faith that gave the queen certain duties toward the church. He then gave her the scepter and the rod, representing temporal royal authority. The scepter was that known as 'Dagobert's', the top of which was composed of the figure of a man seated on an eagle resting on a globe. The much shorter rod was also called the 'rose scepter', since it was topped with a heraldic rose in gold. It was said to give the female sovereign spiritual and charitable responsibilities, whereas the king's role was judicial, as demonstrated by the Hand of Justice. One should, however, be wary of symbolic interpretations of any given object. During Charlotte of Savoy's funeral in 1483, her effigy held a scepter and a Hand of Justice, even though she had never had the slightest judicial authority.[9] Being associated with the king through marriage and her coronation, the female sovereign received the insignia of such authority without ever having effectively wielded it.[10]

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[7] Ritcher-Sherman, 'The Queen', 260–68.

[8] Paris, BnF, Ms. Fr. 2813, fol. 439, *Grandes Chroniques de France (Chronique des règnes de Jean II et de Charles V)*, c. 1375-1380.

For the last step, Joan of Bourbon knelt and was crowned by the archbishop, who was surrounded by ecclesiastics and barons—one of whom, the Countess of Artois, was a woman and peer of France. Finally, the queen was 'enthroned', meaning brought before her throne, which was placed next to and slightly lower than the king's throne and raised on a platform, thereby ensuring the couple's vertical dominion. It was the first ostension of royal majesty, and the queen participated in this display.[11]

The crown used for the ceremony was an exceptional one. There were, in fact, many series of crowns. Those used for the coronation, which were precious and imposing, were kept at the Abbey of Saint-Denis along with the other regalia. Although they have since disappeared, they are well known through drawings and engravings. Depending on their preferences or political circumstances, the kings chose either that of Saint Louis or that referred to as Charlemagne's. The former was said to date back to the first half of the thirteenth century. It was a reliquary crown in which were embedded thorns from Christ's crown and the Savior's hair. Charlemagne's crown, which was a gold circle surmounted with deeply indented fleurs-de-lis and encrusted with precious stones, allegedly dated back to the second half of thirteenth century. It was largely used for the coronation of monarchs during the Late Middle Ages. The queen's crown was identical but lighter.[12] It seems that the gold crown with eight fleurons, which Joan of Évreux had bequeathed to the Abbey of Saint-Denis (in 1343) was used for the last medieval coronations, although the sources are not very forthcoming on the matter, despite the fact that there were a number of different crowns that could have been used.[13] Like her husband, the female sovereign had many circlets, diadems and crowns, which, according to her needs, were used for the various curial ceremonies in which she participated, including 'coronation feasts', entries and receptions for ambassadors.

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[9] Murielle Gaude-Ferragu, '*L'honneur de la reine*' : la mort et les funérailles de Charlotte de Savoie (1er-14 décembre 1483)', *Revue Historique* 652 (2010): 779–804.

[10] Fanny Cosandey, *La reine de France. Symbole et pouvoir*(Paris: Gallimard, 2000), 152.

[11] Le Goff et al., *Le sacre royal*, 177.

[12] Colette Beaune, *Naissance de la nation France* (Paris: Gallimard, 1985), 112–19; Danielle Gaborit-Chopin, 'Les couronnes de sacre des rois et des reines au trésor de Saint-Denis', *Bulletin monumental* 133 (1975): 165–81.

The ceremony concluded with the celebration of a solemn mass. The royal couple performed the rites together, from the offertory (offering of bread, wine and gold coins) and the kiss of peace, to the communion of both kinds, during which the kneeling queen received the host and the wine contained in the Saint Remy chalice after her husband.

'God Save the Queen': The Symbolism of the Queen's Coronation

What does the coronation ritual say about the place granted to the medieval queen within the monarchical system? Indeed, when compared with the place of the king, her position as a subject was emphasized, for there were many dissimilarities. Due to his political role, for example, the monarch took oaths (to be a good Christian and to protect the church and his people), which were not included in the reginal ceremony. The same went for the rites related to the king's knightly qualities, such as the presentation of shoes embroidered with fleurs-de-lis, gold spurs and a sword, which made him the secular arm of the church. Another singular aspect was the cape the king wore over his blue tunic, which was supposed to be pulled up over the left arm like a sacerdotal chasuble. The reginal scepter was also smaller than the king's and the throne much lower. The queen's crown was carried not by the secular and ecclesiastic peers of France, but by simple barons.[14] The main difference was above all that the queen was anointed with sanctified oil, unction with the Holy Chrism being reserved only for the king. Only two parts of her body—the head and the chest—were anointed, whereas her husband received multiple unctions on his head (like the high priest and the kings of the Old Testament) as well as on his chest, between and on his shoulders, the joints of his arms and his hands—like the bishops. The royal body was thereby completely 'invested' by the Holy Chrism.

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[13] Cosandey, *La reine de France*, 132.

[14] Le Goff et al., *Le sacre royal*, 23–33.

The coronation nonetheless rendered the queen a singular figure. It gave her full sovereign dignity and endowed her with a unique status marked by sanctity, which was linked to the anointing with sanctified oil and sanctioned by the specific right to communion of both kinds. While the insignia were perhaps not identical to those of the king, they granted her full queenly duties. The scepter and the rod were symbols of authority, the crown represented her dignity, and the ring stood for her alliance with the church and its support of her. The king also received a ring, as a sign of his marriage to the People of God. At her husband's side, the queen was the guardian of her people's Christian faith and had a duty to combat heresy. Just like the king, the queen was enthroned, an act symbolizing the completeness of her power. While her throne was slightly lower than that of her husband, its ostension was no less remarkable.

The anointing with sacred oil played an especially fundamental role. Other than its effect on the queen's fertility, it offered her spiritual renewal and an aura of exceptional sanctity for a woman. Indeed, even though the sovereign remained a layman, during his coronation he came closer to being a *rex-sacerdos* (or king-priest) by the episcopal anointing on the one hand and his wearing the chasuble like a priest on the other, as well as the communion of both kinds (following the clerics' example).[15] Yet, with the exception of the chasuble, the queen also benefitted from these sacerdotal characteristics, being anointed on the head with chrism like a bishop and, most significantly, taking communion of both kinds—'the body and blood of Our Lord'.[16] This dual communion of bread and wine was absolutely exceptional, reserved only for priests and the king during his coronation. The queen was therefore the only woman to be given this—even nuns were excluded from this rite. While it undoubtedly did not give her the status of 'queen-priestess', since a woman could not accede to a sacerdotal role, it did give her a level of sanctity that came close, an exceptional status that placed her—along with the sovereign—above everyone else. The expression employed by Jean Golein concerning the royal couple in his *Traité du sacré* emphasized this: 'And in this is demonstrated royal and priestly dignity. For the blood is not given separately to anyone else if he is not a priest' (*Et en ce est demonstree la dignité royal et prestal. Car on ne baille a nul autre s'il n'est prestre le sanc separeement*).

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[15] Cosandey, *La reine de France*, 154.

[16] *The Traité du Sacre of Jean Golein.*

This new royal dignity also gave her spiritual and charitable obligations. The Christian queen was a pious queen who watched over the church and the poor. She also had a duty to be a 'mirror of virtues', both for her people and her own salvation. During the imposition of the royal crown, the Archbishop of Reims thus compared her outer beauty to the inner qualities expected of a female sovereign: 'Receive the crown of royal excellence … , so that, just as you are outwardly radiant with your adornments of gold and gems, you strive to be inwardly adorned with the gold of wisdom and the gemstones of virtue.'[17] Here, the crown does not only appear as an insignia. Sanctified—along with the other regalia—by being placed on the altar, it seemed to be endowed with a particular *virtus* that had to support the virtues of the queen, who was a model for all.[18] The coronation equipped her with particular qualities that were indispensable when it came to her new dignity.

In the neighboring kingdom of England, queens had also been crowned since the mid-ninth century. The rite was identical, including the receiving of *regalia*, the anointing of the forehead and the chest and the communion under both kinds.[19] During the fifteenth century, however, it seemed that the ceremonial had lost some of its importance. It was no longer essential for the female practice of royalty, as emphasized by King Henry VII's decision to crown Elizabeth of York not at the beginning of her reign, but after the birth of her first son. Did the coronation suffer the same fate in France?

The Forgotten Coronation?: Queens of the Fifteenth Century

Joan of Bourbon was the last queen to be crowned in Reims with her husband. The queen's coronation subsequently tended to be separate from that of the king in both space and time.[20] The case of Isabeau of Bavaria reveals some of the changes that began to take place. Since her union with Charles VI in 1385 was held five years after the king's coronation, they could not therefore be crowned at the same time. Her coronation was thus separate from her marriage and coincided with her first entry in the kingdom's capital (22 August 1389). Isabeau was pregnant at the time, and the king had just come into power following his uncles' regency. On the advice of the Marmosets (his father's former officers), he organized a series of ceremonies displaying royal majesty.[21] The reginal entry seems to have assumed even more importance than the coronation, at least in the sources. But documentation can sometimes be deceiving, since this was the first major entry by a queen, and the chroniclers—especially Jean Froissart—were impressed by the theatrical spectacles provided by the municipality, which they strived to describe in detail. Yet, the coronation was still constitutive of reginal dignity, being solemnly celebrated and allowing Isabeau to receive the regalia (which she had not been given during her entry: the crown she had received at the Saint-Denis Gate was not the one used during the coronation, and she had only worn royal attire on that occasion). It was celebrated at the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris, the setting for the coronations of queens whose marriages followed their husbands' coronations (as was the case of Philip III's second wife Marie of Brabant in 1275 and Charles IV's successive wives Marie of Luxembourg in 1323 and Joan of Évreux in 1326).[22] The aura of sanctity with which the anointing endowed the female sovereign was reinforced by the presence of the most precious relics of Christianity: those of the Passion.

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[17] Le Goff et al., *Le sacre royal*, 71.

[18] Ibid., 197.

[19] Laynesmith, *The Last Medieval Queens*, 82–110.

[20] Cosandey, *La reine de France*, 129.

In 1389, Charles IV welcomed his wife inside the high chapel, himself dressed in his coronation attire: a tunic, a dalmatic and a red cloak.[23] Isabeau stopped in front of the altar in order to pray facing the shrine (*Grande Châsse*), then bowed to the king before sitting on a raised throne. According to custom, her hair was unbound, and she wore the royal purpure (a dress and a 'laced cloak' in vermilion satin[24]) over a thin top. Jean de Vienne, the Archbishop of Reims, officiated: 'In the middle of the mass, he accomplished the coronation ceremony with pomp and devotion, following the usual forms inserted in the authentic books at the Church of Saint-Denis, which bear the title: *On the Coronation of Kings and Queens*.'[25] Present were the main princes of the blood: the king's brother

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[21] Murielle Gaude-Ferragu, 'Le double corps de la reine. L'entrée d'Isabeau de Bavière à Paris (22 août 1389)', in *Le Corps du Prince, Micrologus,* no. XXII (Sismel: Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2014), 139–69.

[22] Beaune, *Naissance de la nation France*, 119.

[23] *Chronique du religieux de Saint-Denys*, 615.

[24] 'Manteau à laz.' Paris, AN, KK 20, fol. 101 and fol. 165.

[25] *Chronique du religieux de Saint-Denys*, 615.

Louis of Touraine (future Duke of Orleans) and his uncles John of Berry and Philip of Burgundy.[26]

According to tradition, the ceremony was followed by a banquet held in the Great Hall of the Palace and three days of jousting, in which Charles VI participated. The large wooden replica of a castle on wheels brought out during the dessert course was an opportunity to recall the Franks' Trojan origins. Next to it stood a tent evoking the Greek camp and a nave representing their fleet. An ingenious set of mechanisms animated these decorations. Doors opened and a crowd of miniature fighters assailed Troy, which bravely defended itself.[27] The meal was interrupted by a few vagaries. While the royal table—where the queen, Charles VI and the King of Armenia were seated in the place of honor—was isolated by a wooden barrier and protected by sergeants at arms, the other tables were thronged. One was overturned, and the ladies in their tight dresses fainted. Isabeau was bothered by the heat, and a window had to be broken to give her some air.

Thus, despite being eclipsed by the novelty of the entry, the coronation was still essential when it came to asserting reginal dignity in 1389. Ten years later, an anecdote recounted by the Monk of Saint-Denis proves its continued constitutive value. Blanche of Navarre had not had the time to be crowned because her husband Philip VI had died shortly after their marriage in 1350. When she died in 1398, the officers of her *hôtel* were careful to ask the governing princes Philip of Burgundy and Louis of Orleans if, in the absence of unction, the dowager queen could have a royal funeral and be interred at Saint-Denis. The dukes accepted 'out of respect for the memory of her magnanimous husband', but such a debate reveals the value that was still attributed to the queen's coronation at the end of the fourteenth century.[28]

During the following century, while sovereigns continued to be systematically crowned as soon as possible after acceding to the throne, their wives no longer enjoyed such a ceremony. Marie of Anjou and Charlotte of Savoy were never crowned (or at least the sources are silent on this topic). The lack of a coronation in Marie of Anjou's case is easily explained. Her husband Charles VII's coronation took place in a very difficult political and military context following Joan of Arc's victory at Orleans (1429).

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[26] Paris, AN, KK 20, fol. 100 and fol. 105.

[27] Autrand, *Charles VI*, 238–39.

[28] *Chronique du religieux de Saint-Denis*, 657.

Theorists of the monarchy at the time insisted upon the importance of blood, which alone made the king. However, for a large part of the population (including Joan of Arc), the coronation was still constitutive of power and royal dignity, the anointing with the Holy Ampoule truly rendering the king God's lieutenant on earth.[29] Charles VII was thus anointed in Reims after having traversed war-torn France. The queen accompanied the army as far as Giens, where she was asked to turn back, most likely because it was too dangerous.[30]

Charlotte of Savoy's absence at her husband Louis XI's coronation in Reims on 15 August 1461 was also circumstantial. She had just given birth to her second daughter Anne at the Castle of Genappe. There is no trace of a subsequent coronation. The queen made an entry in Paris in September 1467, but there is no mention of her being anointed (the chronicler simply noting that 'her orison' was held at Notre-Dame de Paris).[31] Both reigns constituted exceptions in a long tradition of reginal coronations. In 1492, just two months after marrying Charles VIII, Anne of Brittany was crowned (8 February). Like Isabeau of Bavaria, her coronation was linked to her first entry in the capital, taking place not at the Sainte-Chapelle but at the Abbey of Saint-Denis. This change perhaps corresponded to a ceremonial need, for the queen had to be in full possession of her powers and royal dignity before being officially presented to the Parisian public. It was also about catering to the abbey, which, as the royal sanctuary, dynastic necropolis and guarding place of sovereign bodies and insignia, claimed the privilege of crowning kings or at least their wives.[32] The ritual followed the ancient *ordines*, with the queen kneeling before the basilica's great altar. The Cardinal of Bordeaux anointed her on the head and the chest, placed a crown on her head and gave her the scepter and the Hand of Justice.[33] Anne of Brittany, who was twice crowned Queen of France, was crowned for the second time in 1504, five years after marrying Louis XII. On the other hand, the exceptional grace of unction was not renewed. The sumptuous ceremony was once more held at Saint-Denis and assumed a more pronounced political angle.

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[29] Beaune, *Naissance de la nation France*, 118; Beaune, *Jeanne d'Arc* (Paris: Perrin, 2004).

[30] Chevalier, 'Marie d'Anjou, une reine sans gloire', 87.

[31] Jean de Roye, *Chronique scandaleuse*, ed. Bernard de Mandrot (Paris: SHF, 1894), 1:177–78.

[32] Cosandey, *La reine de France*, 129.

[33] Jean Nicolaï in Didier Le Fur, *Anne de Bretagne : miroir d'une reine, historiographie d'un mythe* (Paris: Guénégaud, 2000), 89.

Saint Louis's crown—the reliquary crown solely reserved for the monarch—was used instead of the usual crown for queens. In addition, the Cardinal of Amboise, the main royal advisor, gave Anne a specific insignia: the espousal ring. This element of the queen's coronation, which had been customary since at least 1365 and symbolized her union with the church, assumed a whole other meaning in this context, 'signifying and denoting that she was marrying and taking possession, seisin and power of the kingdom of France'.[34] It thus made it possible to more strongly emphasize the Duchess of Brittany's definitive union with the kingdom and consequently the joining of her heritage to the Capetian patrimony. More broadly, the coronation of 1504 corresponded to the precise need to recognize Anne as a queen in her own right and a possible regent in case of the king's premature death.

Thus, while marriage made the queen, the coronation endowed her with her full powers. She received both the *regalia* and her exceptional status, which was expressed by the communion of both kinds, though this was limited to the period of the ceremony.

It seems that the reginal coronation lost some of its constitutive value in the fifteenth century (even if circumstantial issues also explain the absence of ceremonies), undoubtedly diminished by the increased importance of other ceremonies, such as the entry, which offered the advantage of displaying the queen's majesty before a larger public and according to methods allowing for a real exchange between the city and its guest. The political depreciation of the coronation can equally be explained by the emergence of a new conception of reginal status, whereby, in the fifteenth century, the female sovereign was above all the one who bore the blood of France. Marie of Anjou and Charlotte of Savoy, who were not anointed, were indisputably considered to be queens in their own right. This had not been the case during the previous century, when Bonne of Luxembourg, who gave France a number of heirs (Charles V and his brothers) but died in 1349 before her husband acceded to the throne, was not interred at Saint-Denis. Such a depreciation, however, was not specific to the queen. During the fifteenth century, theorists of power agreed that the king's legitimacy depended above all on his birth and not the coronation, which was in no way inaugural and had no legal value whatsoever.[35]

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[34] Fanny Cosandey, 'Anne de Bretagne, une princesse de la Renaissance ?', in *Anne de Bretagne. Une histoire, un mythe* (Paris: Somogy, 2007), 34; Le Fur, *Anne de Bretagne*, 93.

[35] Beaune, *Naissance de la nation France*, 118.

The coronation nonetheless remained an act of sacralization.[36] The female sovereign was doubly legitimized, first through her marriage to the king—which procured her the crown—and through the coronation, which lent her a spiritual aspect. A third element further reinforced her status: as the monarch's wife, it was her primary duty to be a mother to the children of France.

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[36] Cosandey, *La reine de France*, 135.

Chapter 3: Bearing the Blood of France

In 1314, Jacques de Molay, grand master of the Knights Templar sentenced to be burned at the stake, pronounced a curse on the King of France: 'Curse, curse, I curse you until the thirteenth generation.' Philip the Fair and his sons would never have any male descendants, and the direct line of the Christian kings was to die out. This is the most well-known episode in the history of the 'accursed kings'.[1] Whether or not this curse—which was almost certainly invented at a later date—was really uttered, Louis X, Philip V and Charles IV died one after the other without ever having engendered sons. Their wives had not successfully fulfilled their essential mission to bear the blood of France—which, in the early fourteenth century, had to be male, since girls were dismissed from all forms of succession. Moreover, the Princesses of Burgundy, Margaret and Blanche, had committed adultery. The cruelty of their sentences reflected the seriousness of their crime, which jeopardized not only the royal family's honor (queens-in-the-making were supposed to demonstrate exemplary behavior) but also the purity of the blood of France. Their sin abandoned the kingdom to confusion.[2]

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[1] Eric Le Nabour, *Les rois maudits. L'enquête historique* (Paris: Perrin, 2005), 265.

[2] Geneviève Bührer-Thierry, 'La reine adultère', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 35, no. 4 (1992): 299–312.

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The Indispensability of Motherhood

Heirs for France

A good queen was one who, continually falling pregnant, succeeded in giving birth to children (preferably sons) who would outlive her. Thus, Joan of Bourbon had nine children, Isabeau of Bavaria 12, Marie of Anjou 13 and Charlotte of Savoy 6. For their first pregnancies, the female sovereigns—like most women—were often quite young. Anne of Brittany, who married Charles VIII in December 1491, gave birth to a son less than 10 months later. She was barely over the age of 15.[3]

Even if they did not risk being repudiated for sterility, women were perpetually anxious to have an heir apparent. For a long time, Joan of Bourbon's pregnancies were too spaced out, especially since she kept giving birth exclusively to daughters. Four years elapsed between the births of her first daughter Joan in 1356 and her second daughter Bonne. She then had to wait six more years before having a third girl. All being of fragile health, they died at a young age. The monarchy was so preoccupied by the queen's fertility that, during the coronation, prayers made extended references to it and implored divine assistance. She finally gave birth to an heir to the crown on 3 December 1368, thus fulfilling her reginal duty. Three centuries later, positions had hardly changed. In 1609, Marie de' Medici experienced a particularly difficult pregnancy. Despite this, Henry IV did not want to grant his wife any respite. 'And every year, my wife will give birth', he told the midwife, who was thus reassured about her professional prospects.[4]

The king frequently joined his wife in her bedchamber, respecting—at least in theory—the prohibitions defined by the church regarding the rhythm of sexual relations, which were forbidden on certain days of the week (especially Sunday), during major periods of fasting as well as during menstruation and pregnancy.[5] Sexuality was not supposed to have any outcome other than conception. The *miroirs aux princesses* explained to women the need for moderation in carnal relations, 'since frequent and excessive copulation leads to the destruction of the soul and the body, the obscuring of reason and the weakening of the spirit'.[6] The sources generally offer few details about the sovereigns' intimate lives. An anecdote on the couple formed by Louis IX and Margaret of Provence is nonetheless worth recounting. The king enjoyed visiting his castle in Pontoise, since, from his room, he was able to easily access the queen's bedchamber below by an interior staircase. When he visited his wife, he did so in great secrecy, out of fear of displeasing his mother. If Blanche of Castile came into either of the rooms at the wrong time, ushers were tasked with warning the couple by knocking on the door with their rods, 'and the king would come running back to his room so that his mother would find him there'.[7]

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[3] Colette Beaune, 'Charles Orland, comment vit et meurt un enfant royal ?', in *Anne de Bretagne. Une histoire, un mythe* (Paris: Somogy, 2007), 51.

[4] Jean-François Dubost, 'Le corps de la reine, objet politique : Marie de Médicis', in *Femmes et pouvoir politique. Les princesses d'Europe, XV*^e*-XVIII*^e *siècle*, eds. Isabelle Poutrin and Marie-Karine Schaub (Paris: Bréal, 2007), 261.

[5] Elodie Lequain, 'L'éducation des femmes de la noblesse en France au Moyen Age (XIII^{e} -XV^{e} siècle)', (PhD diss., Paris-Ouest Nanterre-La-Défense, 2005).

If the announcement of an upcoming birth was delayed, the queens—like other women—used every means in their power. A beautiful illumination depicts Charles V and Joan of Bourbon bringing an ex-voto (a gold statuette) to the altar in order to attract the grace of Christ and obtain an heir.[8] It was also possible to have masses celebrated and prayers spoken or to go on a pilgrimage to sanctuaries that reputedly favored female fertility (including chapels devoted to the Virgin Mary). Specific to the royal and aristocratic world were the personal relics available to the female sovereign, which were believed to have protective powers and to be capable of producing miracles. Charles VI's treasury thus included a stone 'called the holy Stone, which helped women to have a child'.[9]

Medical treatises also listed recipes for favoring fertility. The man was advised to consume foods that 'heated, stimulated, and improved' conception (chestnuts, leeks, carrots and asparagus) and avoid anything that, on the contrary, 'extinguished desire and closed the spermatic canals'.[10] For the wife, health regimens prescribed mandrake and leek as well as laudanum suppositories and fumigation. Advice for specifically conceiving a male heir varied, making use of both botanical knowledge (according to Bartholomew of England, thistle juice was beneficial) and magic. For example, dipping a belt of goat hair in a female donkey's milk was advised by some, while others suggested drinking a potion concocted of wine mixed with the dried and ground-up sexual parts of a hare.

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[6] Denys le Chartreux, *De vita et regimine principum*, in Lequain, *L'éducation des femmes*, 433.

[7] 'Et le roy s'en venoit courant en sa chambre pour ce que sa mere l'i trouvast.' Jean Joinville, *Vie de saint Louis*, ed. Jacques Monfrin (Paris: Bordas, 1997), 300–2.

[8] Paris, BnF, Ms. Fr. 2813, fol. 223, *Grandes Chroniques de France*, in Pierre Riché and Danièle Alexandre-Bidon, *L'enfance au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Seuil, 1994), 39.

[9] Philippe Henwood, *Les collections du trésor royal sous le règne de Charles VI (1380–1422). L'inventaire de 1400* (Paris: CTHS, 2004), 26.

[10] Riché and Alexandre-Bidon, *L'enfance au Moyen Âge*, 42; Didier Lett, *L'enfant des miracles. Enfance et société au Moyen Âge XII^e^-XIII^e^ siècle* (Paris: Aubier, 1997); and Danièle Alexandre-Bidon and Didier Lett, *Les enfants au Moyen Âge V^e^-XV^e^ siècle* (Paris: Hachette, 1997).

'The Hazards of the Job': Pregnancy and Childbirth

As soon as the queen was pronounced pregnant, she became the object of great care. Her every desire was acknowledged and had to be satisfied so that the child would not be deprived of anything. The future mother had to follow a special diet and avoid consuming salty and bitter foods (which would make the child she was carrying more sensitive to childhood diseases). The pregnant woman was also supposed to avoid tiring herself out. It should be noted, however, that female sovereigns continued to travel—sometimes across long distances, royalty still being largely itinerant. Joan of Burgundy actually 'toured France' while pregnant with her second son in 1336, traveling from Artois to the southern regions of France with her husband Philip VI.[11]

Pregnancy was a dangerous time, which doctors divided into periods of greater and lesser risk. The fetus was fragile during the first three months. While the fourth, fifth and sixth months were less perilous, the end of the pregnancy was risky. At this time, it was necessary to avoid giving birth prematurely by resting and relying on religious assistance and medicinal recipes. As a protective measure, Isabeau of Bavaria had small images of gilded silver called 'Agnus Dei' purchased. Worn by pregnant women, they each held an unblessed host.[12] During every pregnancy, she also made a pilgrimage to Saint-Sanctin-de-Chuisnes, near Chartres, where there was a belt belonging to the Virgin Mary.

The majority of medicinal recipes specifically concerned labor. Indeed, childbirth remained hazardous, with around one out of four women dying during her first delivery.[13] Joan of Bourbon was in agony for days after the birth of her daughter Catherine (4 February 1378), eventually dying—

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[11] Jules Viard, 'Itinéraire de Philippe VI de Valois', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes* 74 (1913): 9–10 and 46–48.

[12] 'Que les femmes portent quand elles sont grosses, où l'on met en chascun un pain beneist a chanter.' Yann Grandeau, 'Les enfants de Charles VI. Essai sur la vie privée des princes et des princesses de la maison de France à la fin du Moyen Âge', *Bulletin philologique et historique du Comité des travaux historiques et scientifiques* (Paris: CTHS, 1969), 812.

[13] Riché and Alexandre-Bidon, *L'enfance au Moyen Âge*, 51.

probably of puerperal fever.[14] Royal or princely childbirth was a social act that was meant to be seen, notably in order to attest to the legitimacy of the child. The public was entirely female, composed of specialists, midwives and *ventrières* in addition to ladies of the court. A certain Jeanne la Goutière, a Parisian midwife, served Queen Isabeau of Bavaria, and her excellent reputation led her to assist the queen's sister-in-law Valentina Visconti in 1396.

The actions, instruments and required personnel for delivery were the same as for all women. The parturient give birth in a semi-seated position with her back supported by pillows or a midwife.[15] The account books give details about the objects that were employed, such as the 'vat for holding water' (*cuve à recevoir l'eaue*), the 'basin for washing hands' (*bacin à laver mains*) and 'heater' (*chaufouere*) as well as a 'large boiler garnished and lined with iron rings' (*grant chaudiere garnye et bordee de fer a anneaulx*) and sometimes forceps.[16] Medical books provided a few recipes for easing the work, essentially potions and fumigations. Warm baths with a concoction of emollient substances were also advised.[17]

Other types of assistance, either religious or magic, were sometimes required to facilitate a happy delivery. For each of her childbirths, Isabeau of Bavaria had brought to her Christ's foreskin (*circonsiz Notre Seigneur*), which was kept preserved by the monks at the Abbey of Coulombs, located in the diocese of Chartres.[18] At the court of Burgundy, 'Saint Elizabeth [of Hungary]'s own belt' (*la propre saincture de madame Saincte Elisabeth*) was used.[19] Parturients could also have someone read to them the *Life of Saint Margaret*. Saint Margaret became the patron saint of women in labor after having successfully escaped from the belly of a dragon upon slicing it open with the help of a cross.[20] Some women also carried *sachets d'accouchement*, parchments comprised of the tale of the saint's life and magico-religious formulas to protect mother and child.

Illuminations frequently depicted not the act of childbirth itself, but the hours immediately following it. Thus, Jean Fouquet decorated *The*

[14] Françoise Autrand, *Charles V* (Paris: Fayard, 1994), 809.

[15] Riché and Alexandre-Bidon, *L'enfance au Moyen Âge*, 47.

[16] Grandeau, 'Les enfants de Charles VI', 812.

[17] Sylvie Laurent, *Naître au Moyen Âge. De la conception à la naissance : la grossesse et l'accouchement (XII^{e}-XV^{e} siècle)* (Paris: Le Léopard d'or, 1989), 186.

[18] Grandeau, 'Les enfants de Charles VI', 812.

[19] Georges-Henri Dumont, *Marie de Bourgogne* (Paris: Fayard, 1982), 247.

[20] Riché and Alexandre-Bidon, *L'enfance au Moyen Âge*, 45.

Hours of Étienne Chevalier with a pretty miniature representing the birth of Saint John the Baptist. The scene takes place in a well-heated room crowded with many figures. The new mother Elizabeth lies on a white bed, and the midwife adjusts the sheet. In the foreground, the Virgin Mary holds the newborn on her lap, while a servant prepares a bath and checks the temperature.[21]

The child was immediately tended to at birth, first washed (in water perfumed with rose petals) and then rubbed with salt and honey. In order to protect his or her health and help him or her avoid catching a chill, his or her room was carefully monitored. When Charles VI's children were born, for example, the windows were systematically caulked, even though there was a fire constantly burning in the chimney.[22]

The young prince or princess's quality of sleep was perceived as a decisive element when it came to his physical solidity. The newborn would sleep in a rocking cradle decorated for the children of France with a coat of arms marked with fleurs-de-lis. When he or she grew up, the cradle would be given to the Hôtel-Dieu de Paris Hospital.[23] When a new birth was approaching, the king would buy it back for 16 livres. Poor children and the young king would thus sleep in the same bed, just as Christ had slept in the manger. This brought the royal child closer to God, and it was hoped that this would bring him or her luck in the future, the course of which astrologists would attempt to decipher as soon as he was born. Indeed, scholars thought that celestial bodies exerted an influence over nature, living beings and men. The astral sign was therefore supposed to make it possible to predict the newborn's disposition and character.[24] The practice of princely horoscopes intensified under the reign of Charles V, who was particularly passionate about astrology. A notebook listing the horoscopes of the king's children—which he very likely requested between 1373 and 1377—has been conserved in a manuscript dedicated to astronomy-astrology.[25]

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[21] *Les Heures d'Étienne Chevalier par Jean Fouquet. Les quarante enluminures du musée Condé* (Paris: Somogy, 2003), 62.

[22] Grandeau, 'Les enfants de Charles VI', 813.

[23] Priscille Aladjidi, *Le roi père des pauvres France XIII*^{e}-XV^{e} *siècle* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2008), 4.

[24] Riché and Alexandre-Bidon, *L'enfance au Moyen Âge*, 51.

[25] Oxford, St-John's College 164, fol. 158v-160v; Jean-Patrice Boudet and Emmanuel Poulle, 'Les jugements astrologiques sur la naissance de Charles VII', in *Guerre, pouvoir et noblesse au Moyen Âge : mélanges en l'honneur de Philippe Contamine*, eds. Jacques Paviot and Jacques Verger (Paris: Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 2000), 194.

The Purified Woman: Lying-In and Child Rearing

'The Mystery of the Green Room'[26]

The royal birth, which was an occasion for public rejoicing, was announced to all, including princes, *bonnes villes* (or urban communities) and foreign sovereigns. When her first son was born in 1386, Isabeau of Bavaria sent multiple missives. One of them, addressed to the 'mayors, municipal magistrates, burghers and inhabitants of the town of Abbeville', informed them that during 'our first childbirth, our Lord by his fancy gave us a son'.[27] The happy arrival was celebrated with dignity, inciting banquets, balls and bonfires. The birth of the Dauphin Charles in February 1392 was, according to the Monk of Saint-Denis, an occasion to give 'God solemn actions of grace in all the churches of Paris'.[28] Charles VI also granted the prisoners of Châtelet remission.[29] The birth of a princely child, especially a male heir, thus appeared to be a moment of communion between the king and his people.

The newborn was next presented publicly during his or her baptism. The church recommended baptizing children as soon as possible, within a period that frequently was not supposed to exceed three days—a guideline that royalty seems to have for the most part respected. Thus, all of Charles VI's sons were baptized the day after they were born.[30] The purpose of the ceremony was to purify the newborn (who was stained by original sin) and mark his or her entry into the community of believers. Baptism, which was primarily a religious ritual, was also—as early as Charles V's reign—similar to a courtly ceremony, sharing in the prince's prestige through the illustrious organization of the procession and the abundance of light (200 torches were carried by the *hôtel*'s servants during the baptism of Charles V's first son in 1368[31]). Baptism made it possible to introduce the presumed heir to the constitutional bodies (prelates, noblemen and towns) that were present, thus legitimizing the dynastic succession.

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[26] Thalia Brero, 'Le mystère de la chambre verte. Les influences françaises dans le cérémonial baptismal des cours de Savoie et de Bourgogne', in *La cour du prince,* eds. Murielle Gaude-Ferragu, Bruno Laurioux and Jacques Paviot, 195–208.

[27] Grandeau, 'Les enfants de Charles VI', 813.

[28] *Chronique du religieux de Saint-Denys*, 1:733.

[29] Grandeau, 'Les enfants de Charles VI', 817.

[30] Thalia Brero, *Les baptêmes princiers. Le cérémonial dans les cours de Savoie et Bourgogne XV^{e}-XVI^{e} s.* (Lausanne: Cahiers lausannois d'histoire médiévale, 2005), 5.

[31] *Chronique de Jean II et de Charles V, 1364–1380*, ed. Jules Delachenal (Paris: H. Laurens, 1910–1920), 2:62.

The queen did not participate in this display. Like all women, she had to remain distanced from society after the birth until her religious reintegration, which was marked by a specific ritual: the *relevailles*, or the end of her lying-in period. She nonetheless received many visitors who came to congratulate her, especially on the day of baptism. The period of reclusion in the palace was an occasion to show the new mother's rank. Three rooms in particular were the object of ostentatious luxury: her bedchamber (called the *chambre de gésine*, or 'lying-in room'), the child's room and the parament room.[32] The lying-in room was the most decorated. Entirely hung with priceless fabrics, it could accomodate as many as five beds. The color of the paraments in this room seems to have been crucial and strictly regulated by court protocol. Éléonore de Poitiers, a specialist in etiquette and lady-in-waiting to the princesses of Burgundy, is helpful when it comes to learning more, having formalized the protocol in the treatise *Les honneurs de la cour*, written between 1484 and 1487.[33] During the fourteenth century, she recounts, the queens of France usually wore white for their lying-in, a color that referred to purity and humility. This was notably the case when Isabeau of Bavaria and Valentina Visconti, Duchess of Orleans, gave birth, respectively in 1388 and 1401.[34] Imagine vast ceremonial rooms draped entirely in white sheets and wall hangings.

Over the course of her reign, Isabeau started a new fashion for a green lying-in room, a color she particularly liked and which symbolized youth, hope and renewal.[35] Green, which was first reserved for the queen, subsequently became more widely used throughout other aristocratic courts, particularly Burgundy. According to Éléonore de Poitiers, this color was specific to them. Countesses and other great ladies, she wrote, 'should not have a green room like the queen and the princesses have'.[36] Banners, curtains and bedcovers as well as the wall hangings were made out of the most precious fabrics (satin, damask and golden cloth); similarly, the prince's gold or gilded silver tableware was displayed as proof of the importance of his treasury. When receiving her visitors, the new mother remained in a semi-seated position on her lying-in bed. According to Éléonore de Poitiers's account, the infant Marie of Burgundy—the daughter of Charles the Bold, Grand Duke of Burgundy, and Isabella of Bourbon—was brought back to her mother's room after the baptism and 'lay in her large bed. And all the ladies and damsels, lords and gentlemen entered until the room was full'.[37] They were then served crystallized spices (anis, walnuts and coriander) and hippocras.

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[32] Brero, 'Le mystère de la chambre verte', 195–208.

[33] Jacques Paviot, 'Les honneurs de la cour d'Éléonore de Poitiers', in *Autour de Marguerite d'Écosse*, eds. Geneviève and Philippe Contamine, 164 and 171.

[34] Grandeau, 'Les enfants de Charles VI', 815; F. M. Graves, *Quelques pièces relatives à la vie de Louis I, duc d'Orléans* (Paris: Champion, 1913), 39; and Michel Pastoureau, *Figures et couleurs. Études sur la symbolique et la sensibilité médiévale* (Paris: Le Léopard d'or, 1986).

[35] Jacques Paviot, 'Éléonore de Poitiers. Les États de France (Les honneurs de la cour)', *Annuaire-Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de France* (Paris: Renouard, 1998), 106.

[36] 'Ne doivent point avoir la chambre verte, comme la royne et grandes princesses ont.' Ibid.

Reclusion and Purification

While the decorative attention given to the lying-in room seems specific to the royal and nobiliary world, the new mother reclusion leading up to the *relevailles* concerned all medieval women. This marginal period can be explained by a deeply rooted ancient belief concerning post-puerperal impurity. Yet the church, deviating from Mosaic Law, had never recognized any form of ritual stain in the case of menstruation or childbirth.[38] Indeed, the Book of Leviticus prescribed that women purify themselves after delivering a child: 'If a woman has conceived, and borne a male child, then she shall be unclean seven days; as in the days of her customary impurity … . She shall then continue in the blood of her purification 33 days. She shall not touch any hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary until the days of her purification are fulfilled.'[39] The Virgin Mary had submitted to this law. It should be recalled that Candlemas—which is celebrated on 2 February, or 40 days after the birth of Christ—celebrates both the Presentation of Jesus at the Temple and the Purification of the Virgin Mary, a primarily spiritual purification that offered a justification for the

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[37] 'Couchée en son grand lict. Et toutes les dames et damoiselles, seigneurs et gentilshommes y entrerent jusques la chambre fut pleine.' Ibid., 104.

[38] Catherine Vincent, *Fiat lux : lumière et luminaire dans la vie religieuse en Occident du XIII^e au XVI^e siècle* (Paris: Cerf, 2004), 359–60; Charles de Miramont, 'La fin d'un tabou ? L'interdiction de communier pour la femme menstruée au Moyen Âge. Le cas du XII^{e} siècle', in *Le sang au Moyen Âge* (Montpellier: CRISIMA, 1999), 167–80; and Emmanuelle Caillier, 'Relevailles', in *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique du Moyen Âge*, ed. André Vauchez (Paris: Cerf, 1997), 1302.

[39] Leviticus 12:2–7.

Christian *relevailles*. During the Middle Ages, clerics pondered the validity of such a rite. One of Innocent III's decretals established the childbearer's status in 1198.[40] Although she was ritually pure, out of devotion she could nonetheless prohibit herself from entering a church. However, no ceremony was theoretically necessary to mark her reintegration.

Despite these recommendations, the ritual of the *relevailles* remained widespread in the Medieval West.[41] The twelfth century seems to have marked a turning point in this celebration, as the ceremonial (which, prior to this time, had only consisted of a simple benediction) developed and spread to all social spheres. The purification of the new mother took place at the end of 40 days.[42] The ceremony was held after a mass she attended, seated at some distance from the community. Following the celebration, the priest covered the woman's head with his stole, recited the prologue of the Gospel of Saint John and then offered her bread that had been blessed (she thus did not participate in the sacrament of the Eucharist). Finally, he sprinkled her with holy water to purify her, which allowed her to reintegrate into the world. A lit candle was offered, alluding to the feast of Candlemas as well as to that used in customs for the reconciliation of penitents.[43] This ceremony, which was practiced in every social sphere, led to great festivities in the royal world and a major display of luxury involving sumptuous dress, a profusion of guests and a gargantuan meal. For her *relevailles*, Isabeau of Bavaria had a red velvet dress with 'openwork embroidery' purchased.[44] The ceremonial unfolded at the very heart of the princely palace, in the castle chapel. Éléonore de Poitiers evokes 'past times', when 'princesses were seated on the heavily decorated and richly adorned bed; and from there, princes and knights took them; and trumpets and minstrels led them into the chapel to raise them up'. She pleads for more moderate splendor: 'At the raising of all the princesses … , there should hardly be any people … . And it also seems to me that the less feasting and the more simple, the more honest the day.'[45] During the religious ceremony, the classic ritual of an offering took place, which was particularly developed in the royal and princely world. The new mother was supposed to make a triple donation of a candle in which a piece of gold or silver was lodged, bread and a jug of wine. For the faithful of more modest means, the oblation appears to have been much more sober, being composed of a single candle and sometimes a small round piece of bread.[46] Descending from the aristocracy, Saint Elizabeth of Hungary wanted to carry out the *relevailles* ceremony with humility after delivering each of her three children and offered the church a lamb—in reference to Christ—and a simple candle.

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[40] Miramont, 'La fin d'un tabou', 167; Caillier, 'Relevailles', 1302.

[41] Lett, *L'enfant des miracles*, 260.

[42] Guillaume Durand, *Rational ou manuel des divins offices*, ed. Charles Barthélemy (Paris: J. Franz,1854), 368; A. Davril and T.-M. Thibodeau, *Guillelmi Duranti Rationale divinorum officiorum* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1995), 7:36–38.

[43] Vincent, *Fiat lux*, 361.

[44] Grandeau, 'Les enfants de Charles VI', 818.

[45] 'Les princesses estoient assises sur le lict, fort parées et ornées richement; et de là les prenoient princes ou chevaliers; et trompettes et menestriers les menoient en la chappelle

THE MOTHER AS EDUCATOR

A Mother's Care

According to the sociologist Philippe Ariès, the idea of childhood did not exist in the Middle Ages. Indeed, he suggests that children died so often at a young age that maternal love could not flourish.[47] Does the study of the queen as a mother confirm this old thesis, which is now questioned today?[48]

While most female sovereigns gave France countless children, death claimed many of them. Infant mortality was extremely high at the time. Generally, about three children out of ten never reached the age of one, and nearly as many died before puberty.[49] In the aristocratic world, while the young prince enjoyed privileged living conditions when it came to food and hygiene, medicine was often of little aid once an illness developed. Death followed high fevers, epidemics, intestinal problems or, in the case of Charles VI and Isabeau's children, diverse forms of tuberculosis.[50] The figures speak volumes. Joan of Bourbon, for example, gave birth to nine children, but only two sons—the Dauphin Charles (the future

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relever … . À la relevée de toutes princesses …, ne doit avoir guere de gens … . Et aussi il me semble que le moins de feste, et le plus simplement, est le plus honneste pour ce jour.' Paviot, 'Éléonore de Poitiers', 111.

[46] Vincent, *Fiat Lux*, 361–62.

[47] Philippe Ariès, *L'enfant et la vie familiale sous l'Ancien régime* (Paris: Plon, 1960).

[48] Alexandre-Bidon and Lett, *Les enfants au Moyen Âge*; Riché and Alexandre-Bidon, *L'enfance au Moyen Âge*.

[49] Alexandre-Bidon and Lett, *Les enfants au Moyen Âge*, 61.

[50] Grandeau, 'Les enfants de Charles VI', 843.

Charles VI) and Louis (the future Duke of Orleans)—lived for more than ten years. She thus saw all her daughters die in succession (Joan died at four years old, Isabella at five and Marie at six, while Bonne and a second Joan were only a few months old) and one of her sons, John, to whom she gave birth a few days before she herself died in 1378, lived to be ten. Charlotte of Savoy saw three of her six children die: Joachim (four months old in 1459), Louise (in 1460) and Francis (four hours after his baptism in 1459).[51]

While the pain felt by those closest to the child—especially the mother—is still difficult to assess, a few clues tend to prove that, far from having 'tamed' their emotions, mothers were deeply affected by the death of their offspring. Thus, the Monk of Saint-Denis was moved by the abundance of tears shed by Isabeau of Bavaria over the death of her last baby Philip in November 1407. Similarly, when the Dauphin Charles Orland died at the age of three in December 1495, Anne of Brittany went into 'deep mourning', as her crying and lamentation attested.[52] It is true that the expected reactions to the death of a loved one were codified (tears, cries and sometimes gestures of distress), regardless of how much pain was really felt. Beyond the standardized rhetoric of mourning, it can be agreed that these mothers' distress was undoubtedly not entirely feigned.

Their children were always carefully buried in either the dynastic sanctuaries, the Cistercian Abbeys of Royaumont or Maubuisson, the Collegiate Church of Poissy or, from Charles V's reign onward, in the royal necropolis of Saint-Denis. Two of the kings' children, Joan and Isabella, were laid to rest beside him in the Chapel of Saint John the Baptist; the same was the case for Charles VI's sons Charles (who was less than a year old when he died in 1386), another Charles (who died at the age of nine in 1400) and Philip (a newborn who lived less than a day).[53] During the second half of the fifteenth century, the sanctuaries in the Val de Loire region, where the sovereigns and their wives resided, were favored sites of burial. Charles VII's sons and daughters were laid to rest in Tours, and Louis XI's children were in either Amboise or Tours, where the Dauphin Charles Orland was buried in the chancel of Saint Martin of Tours Abbey—which today is in the Cathedral of Saint Gatien.[54]

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[51] Didier Le Fur, *Charles VIII* (Paris: Perrin, 2006), 20.

[52] On Isabeau, see: Adams, *The Life and Afterlife*, 232; Colette Beaune, 'Charles Orland, comment vit et meurt un enfant royal?', in *Anne de Bretagne. Une histoire, un mythe* (Paris: Somogy, 2007), 53.

[53] Beaune, *Naissance de la nation France*, 120–23.

The memory of the young princes was commemorated by the erection of beautiful tombs, which were frequently ordered by the queens. These monuments are moving as much because of their beauty and the subtlety of their sculptures as to the evocation—due to the size of the tomb—of the infant bodies they contain. The recumbent statue of John I the Posthumous (d. 1316) in the Abbey of Saint-Denis, which was probably made at his mother Clementia of Hungary's request, is remarkable in that the sculptor was able to tenderly capture the image of the plump and smiling baby with his fine face and pretty curls.[55] The funerary monument Anne of Brittany ordered from Michel Colomb's atelier and Jerome Pacherot has the particularity of including two infant 'bodies in stone' on a single base, those of her two sons Charles Orland and Charles, who died respectively in 1495 and 1496. The eldest of the dauphins wears the crown, while the youngest is still in swaddling clothes.[56]

The Time of Wet Nurses

While maternal love and the 'idea of childhood' comes across in a number of medieval sources, it should nonetheless not be believed that the queens (or, more generally, noblewomen) took care of their offspring on a daily basis. Their time was monopolized by other duties, whether of a pious or a representative nature. Above all, they were assisted by a large female staff specifically tasked with caring for newborns—as Isabeau of Bavaria demonstrated by employing 'cradlers' (*berceresses*), people to oversee naps and fulfill nighttime duties, and wet nurses.[57] Indeed, female sovereigns did not nurse their children themselves, even though theorists valorized maternal breastfeeding for both religious (as a means of redeeming oneself by imitating the Virgin Mary) and physiological reasons. They all thought that milk passed on the mother's virtues to her child (apparently the blood of the uterus became white after childbirth) in a hereditary manner.[58]

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[54] Ibid., 169; Beaune, 'Charles Orland', 55.

[55] Françoise Baron, 'Jean I^{er}, roi de France', in *L'art au temps des rois maudits : Philippe le Bel et ses fils, 1285–1328* (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 1998), 130.

[56] *France-1500. Entre Moyen Âge et Renaissance* (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 2010), 154–55.

[57] Grandeau, 'Les enfants de Charles VI', 819.

[58] Alexandre-Bidon and Lett, *Les enfants au Moyen Âge*, 123.

Despite these medical prescriptions, the use of wet nurses remained an undeniable practice that was long specific to the aristocratic world and the affluent classes in large urban centers but which became more widespread beginning in 1300.[59] For the queen, it was out of the question to deviate from ancestral practice, since she primarily had to give the kingdom as many heirs as possible. While breastfeeding did not eliminate one's chances of procreating, it did reduce them.

The theory whereby values were passed on through milk explains why wet nurses were selected with the utmost care. It was a difficult choice, since it combined a number of requirements. According to doctors and teachers, a good wet nurse had to be between 25 and 35 years old, have irreproachable morals, maintain exemplary hygiene, and abstain from sexual relations during the breastfeeding period because it risked contaminating the milk. Her breasts had to be voluminous so that the milk was abundant but not excessively large, for fear that the baby's nose would become short and stubby. Indeed, the infant's body was perceived to be like soft wax. The fear of involuntary deformation also explains why the newborn was tightly wrapped in swaddling clothes.[60]

The wet nurses' first names randomly figure in the account books. Those who cared for Charles VI's children are known. Ouazanne was Louis of Guyenne's wet nurse, Guillemette was that of Catherine of France and Jeanne de Chamoisy was that of the future Charles VII.[61] The Dauphin Charles, son of Louis XI and Charlotte of Savoy, was nursed by Michelle Adveniate, who became the prince's chambermaid in 1471.[62] All were well respected, which sometimes resulted in their receiving pension for life. John, Duke of Berry and the son of John II and Bonne of Luxembourg, never parted ways with his wet nurse Gille de Caumont and made her husband, the Burgundian knight Geoffroy de Germolles, his *maître d'hôtel*.[63] The account books for Charlotte of Savoy's *hôtel* (1483) equally show that the wet nurses of the royal children Anne, Louise, Jeanne and François received revenues for positions that they had not filled in some time.[64] These women had clearly established particular emotional ties with the children with whom they were entrusted and continued to take care of them well after they were weaned, which was at the approximate age of two.

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[59] Didier Lett, *L'enfant des miracles. Enfance et société au Moyen Âge (XII^e-XIII^e siècle)* (Paris: Aubier, 1997), 263.

[60] Danièle Alexandre-Bidon, 'Du drapeau à la cotte : vêtir l'enfant au Moyen Âge (XIII^e-XV^e siècles)', in *Le vêtement. Histoire, archéologie et symbolique vestimentaires au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Le Léopard d'or, 1989), 125.

[61] Grandeau, 'Les enfants de Charles VI', 818.

[62] Le Fur, *Charles VIII*, 26.

[63] Françoise Autrand, *Jean de Berry* (Paris: Fayard, 2000), 72-73.

While breastfeeding was mercenary, children nonetheless spent much time with their mothers. The exceptional conservation of the account books for Isabeau of Bavaria's Chamber of Deniers makes it possible to demonstrate this, at least for her reign.[65] The itinerary of the queen and her children during two years of their itinerancy must be retraced. For over a year from July 1403 to August 1404, they mostly resided together at the Hôtel Saint-Pol. Isabeau was rarely absent, only leaving for short stays at her castle in Corbeil (July 1403) and the Hôtel Barbette in Paris (July 1404). In September and October 1404, she was either traveling (pilgrimage to Saint-Fiacre) or staying at Barbette (from 12 October to 9 November), while her children were still at Saint-Pol. Her trips became more frequent in the spring and summer, with stays in Crécy and Château-Thierry (in May), at the Hôtel Barbette (in June), in Melun (in August and September) and in Corbeil (in October). She then returned to Saint-Pol, where she again stayed all winter. At that time, her children were either at Saint-Pol or the Louvre. The separation between mother and children was therefore far from systematic. Furthermore, Isabeau sometimes brought them with her on her travels. In September 1402, for example, her daughters Isabella, Joan and Michelle accompanied her on her pilgrimage to Saint-Fiacre.[66]

It was the same at the court of Burgundy. During his childhood, John the Fearless mostly lived with Margaret of Male at the ducal palace in Dijon and the Castles of Rouvres, Châtillon-sur-Seine, Montbard and Jaucourt.[67] Charles the Bold also spent many years either with his parents

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[64] Alexandre Tuetey, 'Inventaire des biens de Charlotte de Savoie', *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* 26 (1865): 6–7.

[65] Paris, AN, KK 45 and 46; Yann Grandeau, 'Itinéraire d'Isabeau de Bavière', *Bulletin philologique et historique des travaux historiques et scientifiques* (1964): 569–670.

[66] Grandeau, 'Les enfants de Charles VI', 822.

[67] Bertrand Schnerb, *Jean sans Peur. Le prince meurtrier* (Paris: Biographie Payot, 2005), 35.

Philip the Good and Isabella of Portugal (who frequently shared the same itinerant lifestyle) or, when his parents were apart, with his mother.[68]

In England too, historians have reconsidered the traditional idea that royal children were isolated from their parents.[69] Although female sovereigns traveled a lot, they were sometimes accompanied by their sons and daughters—as was the case of Elizabeth Woodville, who often traveled with her son Edward of Lancaster. Above all, they were preoccupied by their children's education and took great care choosing the adequate staff for their training. The same was true for the queens of France.

The Children of France's Education

Men and women accorded much importance to their children's education during the Middle Ages. They all knew how malleable children were; one account described them as being just like soft wax, which easily receives the seal's imprint.[70] This explains the need for early and high-quality learning.

The mother was more specifically in charge of her children's religious and moral education. As early as the ninth century, Dhuoda, the wife of an important lord from the Carolingian aristocracy, wrote a manual intended for the education of her eldest son that was full of spiritual advice. The way Blanche of Castile instructed her children—especially her eldest son Louis IX—also provided a model for queens. According to Jean de Joinville, the Holy King's companion and biographer, '[Louis] was protected by God, in regard to his soul, from his earliest years to his death, and also in respect to the good doctrine he received from his mother, who taught him to believe in God, and to love and fear him, in his youth.'[71] Preoccupied with his religious and intellectual training, she had him listen to preachers' sermons from an early age. The famous illumination that adorns *The Hours of Joan of Navarre* highlights her central position, as Saint Louis is depicted learning to read with a cleric's help under Blanche of Castile's watchful eye and direction.[72]

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[68] Monique Sommé, 'La jeunesse de Charles le Téméraire d'après les comptes de la cour de Bourgogne', *Revue du Nord* 64 (1982): 735.

[69] John C. Parsons, *Medieval Queenship*, (New York: St Martin's Press, 1993); Joanna L. Laynesmith, *The Last Medieval Queens*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[70] Christine de Pisan, *Le Livre des faits et bonnes meurs du sage roi Charles V*, ed. S. Solente (Paris: SHF, 1936), 1:7 and 8.

[71] *Memoirs of John Lord de Joinville, grand seneschal of Champagne*, trans. Thomas Johnes (At the Hafod Press by James Henderson, 1807), 1:107.

The account books show that Isabeau of Bavaria was scrupulous in ensuring that her children received all that was necessary for their early education in religion and reading. To do so, she ordered a missal for her son John to use at chapel and a missal, a psalter and an alphabet book of psalms for her daughter Michelle.[73] The religious education of the future Duke of Burgundy, John the Fearless, was also overseen by his mother Margaret of Male, who had him attend religious services from an early age.[74] These examples are not specific to royal and princely spheres. During her trial, Joan of Arc declared that her mother had taught her three indispensable prayers: the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary and the Apostles' Creed.[75]

Fathers were also very much present at their children's side.[76] The growth of the cult of Saint Joseph beginning at the end of the thirteenth century was undoubtedly the most visible display of a nurturing and tender father figure in the Middle Ages.[77] As the child grew, the father's role as educator became essential and was not reduced to that of an authority figure. The following words spoken by Blanche of Castile when Louis IX took the cross in 1244 acted as a reminder of a father's duties, at least in theory: 'Think at least of your children, whom you abandon at the cradle: they need your lessons and your help; what would they become in your absence?'[78]

However, the parents' involvement could never be enough, even when it came to moral and religious education. In reality, children of royal and princely rank were at a very young age placed under the care of a governess who was generally chosen from among their mother's ladies-in-waiting and was entrusted with their education, the management of their circle and the budget allotted for their material maintenance.[79] Madame de Malicorne had been serving Isabeau of Bavaria for many years when she was named Louis of Guyenne's governess. Jeanne du Mesnil, governess of the future Charles VII, was the wife of the queen's head cupbearer (*premier échanson*).[80]

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[72] Paris, BnF, nouvelles acquisitions latines n° 3145, fol. 85 v°.

[73] Adams, *The Life and Afterlife*, 232.

[74] Schnerb, *Jean sans Peur*, 28.

[75] Lett, *L'enfant des miracles*, 155.

[76] Alexandre-Bidon and Lett, *Les enfants au Moyen Âge*, 112.

[77] Paul Payan, *Joseph. Une image de la paternité dans l'Occident médiéval* (Paris: Aubier, Collection Historique, 2006).

[78] Mathieu Paris, *Chronica majora*, in *Les propos de saint Louis*, ed. David O'Connell (Paris: Gallimard - Collection Archives, 1974), 68–71.

For boys, their military and social training was entrusted to one or many noble governors and good knights chosen from the prince's inner circle. Their intellectual training was carried out by private tutors—often educated clerics—from the mendicant or secular orders, who were equipped with a solid education. Philip the Fair's young tutor Laurent d'Orléans was a Dominican, Philip III's confessor and the author of a famous treatise on education entitled the *Somme le Roi* (1279). Charles VI's private tutor Michel de Creney was a secular cleric and master of arts from the College of Navarre. He subsequently became a chaplain and then the king's confessor in 1389. Following his example, the role of private tutor remained linked to the office of confessor of the dauphin.[81]

The king and the queen paid particular attention to the choice of educational staff. The couple—and especially the queen—then had to personally ensure that the training went smoothly. According to Christine de Pizan, a father had to find a private tutor for his sons, but a princess 'will plan exactly how to properly nurture good habits, will select the men and women to take charge, and will supervise how they fulfill their duties. She will leave nothing to the report of others. Personally visiting her children in their rooms, seeing them put to bed at night and awakened in the morning, she will direct their care'.[82]

The account books attest to the fact that the female sovereign not only ordered books for her children, but also toys that would help them to learn, such as a 'golden rattle' made for 'His Grace Louis of France to play' (*esbatre monseigneur Loys de France*) or the 'golden windmill decorated with pearls and small brooms for Madame Ysabel's play' (*moulin d'or garni de perles et de balays petis, pour l'esbattement de madame Ysabel*).[83]

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[79] Lequain, *L'éducation des femmes*, 174; Jacques Krynen, *Idéal du prince et pouvoir royal en France à la fin du Moyen Âge (1380-1440). Étude de la littérature politique du temps* (Paris: A. et J. Picard, 1981), 83.

[80] Grandeau, 'Les enfants de Charles VI', 819.

[81] Xavier de la Selle, *Le service des âmes à la cour. Confesseurs et aumôniers des rois de France* (Paris: École des Chartes, 1995), 155.

[82] *A Medieval Woman's Mirror of Honor: The Treasury of the City of Ladies, Christine de Pizan*, ed. Charity Cannon Willard (New York: Persea Books, 1989), 102-3.

[83] Paris, AN, KK 41, fol. 139.

The queen's alleged disinterest in her children was often criticized. Outside of the polemical texts aimed at tarnishing the image of certain queens, the sources in fact prove the opposite. While queens indeed did not nurse their children, it was primarily for medical reasons, since breast-feeding prolonged intergeneric spacing. Furthermore, account books—notably those for Isabeau of Bavaria—attest to the residential proximity between mother and child. Although the queen often traveled in the spring and summer, visiting important sanctuaries or journeying to her many residences according to the political events of the day, she frequently returned to her children, in particular at the Hôtel Saint-Pol. She oversaw their education and had the necessary books and toys purchased for their education.

The Queen of France's maternal role was valorized by royalty through ceremonies organized in her honor (Isabeau's entry in 1389[84]) and the monumentalization of her image. For a more limited public, pictures in manuscripts had already depicted her surrounded by her children. On the miniature decorating the Carmelite Jean Golein's translation of Guillaume Durand's work (*Rational des divins offices*), Charles V and Joan of Bourbon are seen accompanied by their two sons—the Dauphin Charles (the future Charles VI) and Louis of Touraine—and their two daughters, Marie and Isabella.[85] Genealogical trees, which multiplied at the time, also granted the mother of the children of France her rightful place.[86]

Representations of the royal family also decorated the stonework on the palace. On the consoles overhanging the western entrance of the Bastille, Charles V and Joan of Bourbon were represented in the company of Charles and his brother Louis surrounding Saint Anthony. On the spiral staircase known as the *Grande Vis* at the Louvre, the royal family (in the strict sense of the word) is surrounded by the king's brothers (the Dukes of Anjou, Berry and Burgundy), his uncle Philip of Orleans and, just above them, the Virgin Mary and Saint John. The royal family was similarly depicted in England.[87] At Canterbury Cathedral, stained-glass windows represent Edward IV (King from 1461 to 1483) and Elizabeth

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[84] See above, chap. 6.

[85] Paris, BnF, Ms. Fr. 437, fol. 1 in Colette Beaune, *Les manuscrits des rois de France au Moyen Âge. Le miroir du pouvoir* (Paris: Bibliothèque de l'Image, 1997), 115.

[86] See: *Le Sacre, couronnement, triomphe et entrée de la reine et duchesse, Madame Claude de France* (1517), Paris, BnF, Ms. Fr. 5750, fol. 45; Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, *L'ombre des ancêtres. Essai sur l'imaginaire médiéval de la parenté* (Paris: Fayard, 2000).

[87] Laynesmith, *The Last Medieval Queens*, 144.

Woodville with their seven children kneeling at a prie-dieu. They celebrate the Yorks' legitimacy and fertility, and were witnessed by every pilgrim who came to pray over Thomas Becket's reliquary.

The queen's role, in both France and England, as mother of the royal children was indeed an essential one, since she was supposed to provide the kingdom with heirs and thus guarantee the continuation of the family line. However, this matrical purpose was not new and does not explain the iconographical, monumental and ceremonial valorization of her maternal role during the first half of the fourteenth century. It seems that this should be interpreted in two ways, one linked to the exaltation of royal blood (which was on the rise at the time) and the other linked to virginal assimilation. The king was careful when choosing his wife from among the princesses of the most noble blood—blood that, when combined with his, was supposed to engender the beautiful lineage of the children of France. Indeed, Aristotelian theories attributed the essential role in procreation to the male seed.[88] The blood that the king passed on to his children was pure, virtuous and specific. The queen contributed to this mystique nonetheless.[89] She brought her own—equally prestigious—blood, whether she be descended from a foreign house (such as that of Bohemia or Bavaria) or 'the garden of France' (Burgundy or Bourbon), even more illustrious in the latter case since she was often directly descended from the Capetians and therefore Saint Louis. Both the Valois and Capetian bloods thus came together to form a single branch, further adding to the legitimacy of the kings of France—which was contested at the time. Faced with claims emanating from England and within the kingdom (Charles of Évreux-Navarre), the monarchy thus valorized the queen's body as guaranteeing dynastic continuity and the prestige of the royal blood.

The assertion of the female sovereign as mother of the children of France was also related to virginal symbolism. With the cult of the Virgin Mary (especially the image of Theotokos) on the rise and the Virgin and Child represented on a myriad of iconographical surfaces,[90] the parallel between the celestial queen and the terrestrial queen was promoted by royalty. The female sovereigns themselves largely participated in the expansion of the cults of both the Virgin Mary and Holy Kinship, which, through the figure of Saint Anne (the Virgin Mary's mother) emphasized the importance of women in the family unit.[91] Thus, as Mary bore the Infant Jesus and nursed him, the queen bore the blood of France and protected it. This allegory was further reinforced by the assertion—not only maternal but political—of the female sovereign as a mediator for peace. Far from being excluded from the public sphere, she did indeed have to fulfill her role as queen, which was very much a 'profession'.

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[88] Claude Thomasset, 'De la nature féminine', in *Histoire des femmes. Le Moyen Âge*, eds. Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot (Paris: Plon, 1991), 63.

[89] Andrew W. Lewis, *Royal Succession in Capetian France: Studies on Familial Order and the State* (London: Harvard University Press, 1981); Maaike Van der Lugt and Charles de Miramont, 'Penser l'hérédité au Moyen Âge', in *L'hérédité entre Moyen Âge et époque moderne*, *Micrologus* 27 (2008): 3–40; and Allirot, *Filles de roy de France*, 508.

[90] Millet and Rabel, *La Vierge au manteau*, 63.

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[91] Allirot, *Filles de roy de France*, 508.

PART II

A Woman in Politics: The Power of the Queen

Chapter 4: The 'Profession' of Queen

In Granada on the night between 1 and 2 January 1492, a Spanish detachment occupied the Alhambra in a well-known episode commemorated by a number of large-scale historical frescoes. At dawn, three shots fired from cannons signaled the success of the military operation. Later the same day, the last emir, Boabdil, handed the keys to the city over to the Catholic monarchs. The *Reconquista* had been accomplished, and Spain was now freed from the Moors. This reconquest was one of the major objectives set by the royal couple Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella the Catholic, who united two of the Iberian peninsula's crowns under one scepter.[1] Isabella was heiress to the kingdom of Castile and, despite being a woman, fully asserted her royal prerogatives, governing alongside her husband. All of the official texts were established in the names of both sovereigns, since together the royal couple embodied one will.

In other European kingdoms, women could inherit power on the same terms as men (as was the case in England, the kingdom of Navarre, the kingdom of Naples, Hungary, Poland and the Scandinavian countries). Mary and Elizabeth Tudor offered the most striking examples of this during the mid-sixteenth century.[2] The governments under both women,

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[1] Joseph Pérez, *Isabelle la Catholique. Un modèle de chrétienté ?* (Paris: Biographie Payot, 2004), 15.

[2] Armel Dubois-Nayt, 'La représentation de Marie Stuart dans *Rerum Scoticarum Historia* de George Buchanan: l'anatomie d'un pouvoir tyrannique au féminin', in *Femmes de pouvoir et pouvoir des femmes dans l'Occident médiéval et moderne* (Valenciennes: Lez Valenciennes no. 41/42—Presses universitaires de Valenciennes, 2009), 97–111.

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who were heiresses and fully ruling queens, are still remembered today, notably for their radical religious policies favoring first Catholicism (Mary) and then Protestantism (Elizabeth).

This was not the case in France, however, where real power only belonged to the male sovereign. The queen was simply the king's wife, and a woman could not embody royal sovereignty, an inability linked to the fact that the daughters of France were excluded from the crown in 1316 and 1328. This exclusion was circumstantial and reinforced the convenient rediscovery of Salic Law. With the king in charge of executing all acts of sovereignty, which were taken in his name alone, what was the queen's place in the monarchical system?

Capetian Queens and Salic Law

The 'profession of queen', which was situated between real power and symbolic power, is a complex role to define and has been the subject of historiographical debate. According to Marion Facinger, the tenth and eleventh centuries marked the height of reginal authority, as frequent references to the names of female sovereigns in the royal charters attest.[3] Other female historians, such as Miriam Shadis and Claire Ritcher-Sherman, have lent further nuance to this statement by showing that, between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, certain queens held an 'office' by acting as regents in the absence of their husbands (Blanche of Castile and Isabeau of Bavaria) or wielded power—indeed more symbolic but no less real—as wives of the kings. This was the case of Joan of Bourbon, who was present at the solemn session of the Parlement of Paris in 1369, during which the Gascons' appeals were accepted and it was decided that hostilities against England would resume.[4]

In order to untangle the complex web of female power and understand how it was eventually redefined during the Late Middle Ages, it is first necessary to recall the specific office held by the first Capetian queens.

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[3] Marion Facinger, 'A Study of Medieval Queenship: Capetian France, 987-1237', *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History* 5 (1968): 3–47.

[4] Miriam Shadis, 'Blanche de Castille and Facinger's "Medieval Queenship": Reassessing the Argument', in *Capetian Women*, ed. Kathleen Nolan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 137–61; Claire Ritcher-Sherman, 'Taking a Second Look: Observations on the Iconography of a French Queen, Jeanne de Bourbon (1338–1378)', in *Feminism and Art History: Questioning the Litany*, eds. Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard (New York: Harper and Row, 1982), 110–17.

There was a time (between the tenth and twelfth centuries) when the king's wife acted as a *consors regni* alongside him, having been delegated a share of real power.[5] During the tenth century, for example, the Queen of West Francia played a real role in diplomacy, as proven by a letter that King Hugh Capet addressed in 988 to Empress Theophano, Emperor Otto's widow and regent of the empire in her son's name. In it, he announced that 'Queen Adelaide [his wife] co-bearer of the royalty with which we have associated her' would meet with the empress in order to strengthen the pact of friendship that had been concluded between them.[6] Here, the female sovereign appears as a *consors regni* (even though she did not officially hold the title), associated with the throne and capable of representing her husband in the outside world when wielding public power.

Royal charters equally attest to the Capetian queens' participation in public affairs. They underwrote numerous acts by their spouses and sons, with 40 royal and seigneurial charters bearing their names between the mid-tenth century and the early twelfth century.[7] On numerous occasions, they gave their consent to royal provisions (approximately 65 times during the same period). As a member of the *curia regis*, the female sovereign took part in governmental decisions. She was also present during important monarchical ceremonies, assemblies, the crowning of the dauphin and receptions for foreign dignitaries. During the twelfth century, the reign of Adelaide of Maurienne (wife of Louis VI, d. 1155) and the reign of Adela of Champagne (third wife of Louis VII, d. 1206) in many ways represented the apex of this participation. Adelaide was the only queen for whom the years of her reign were mentioned in the royal diplomas after that of her husband. In total, her name appeared 45 times in the royal charters, attesting to her participation in the kingdom's affairs. It was notably recorded alongside that of Louis VI on charters guaranteeing churches and monasteries royal protection as well as on acts granting privileges to certain urban communes. Adelaide was also the first female sovereign to issue a large number of acts in her own name, which she stamped with a large diplomatic seal. Adela of Champagne's reign was equally exceptional. From 1163-1164 and after the death of Louis VII (1180), she granted 110 acts, all of which were passed in her own name.

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[5] Stafford, *Queens, Concubines and Dowagers*; Parsons, *Medieval Queenship*; Anne J. Duggan, ed., *Queens and Queenship in Medieval Europe* (Woodbridge: Boyder and Brewer, 1997); Nelson, 'Les reines carolingiennes', in *Femmes et pouvoirs des femmes dans le haut Moyen Age et à Byzance*, eds. Stéphane Lebecq et al. (Villeneuve-d'Ascq: Centre de recherche sur l'histoire de l'Europe du Nord-Ouest, 1999), 121–32; Régine le Jan, 'D'une cour à l'autre : les voyages des reines de Francie au X^e^ siècle', in *Femmes, pouvoir et société dans le haut Moyen Âge* (Paris: Picard, 2001), 39; and Le Jan, 'L'épouse du comte du IX^e^ au XI^e^ siècle : transformation d'un modèle et idéologie du pouvoir', in *Femmes, pouvoir et société dans le haut Moyen Âge* (Paris: Picard, 2001), 27.

[6] Gerbert, *Correspondance*, eds. Pierre Riché and Jean-Pierre Callu (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1991–1993), 287.

[7] Jean Dufour, 'De l'anneau sigillaire au sceau : évolution du rôle des reines de France jusqu'à la fin du XIII^e^ siècle', in *Corpus des sceaux. Les sceaux des reines et des enfants de France*, ed. Marie-Adélaïde Nielen (Paris: Service interministériel des Archives de France, 2011), 11–25.

The queen's authority began to wane under the reign of Philip Augustus (d. 1223),[8] jointly influenced by the progressive consolidation and centralization of royal power along with the development of clerical misogyny—which was reinforced by the rediscovery of Aristotle's theses stigmatizing the weakness of the female sex. Little by little, the queen ceased to be considered a privileged partner, and her name vanished from the charters and royal diplomas. While her power did not disappear, it was redefined outside the field of the chancery's acts.

Female royal power seems to have lost all influence when the daughters of France were excluded from the crown in the fourteenth century. Without entering into the details of this political process, it is necessary to recall the main events by examining in particular how 'gender' weighed in this exclusion. Was women's supposed weakness the deciding factor when it came to dismissing them?

The question concerning the access of the daughters of France to royal dignity was first raised in 1316, when Louis X the Stubborn died. Up until then, the 'Capetian Miracle' had always resulted in male heirs for the kingdom. At the time of his death, Louis X's wife Clementia of Hungary was pregnant. The king had already had a daughter, five-year old Joan, by his first wife, Margaret of Burgundy, who was convicted of adultery and imprisoned at Château-Gaillard (where she died in 1315). While Margaret's behavior—which implied that her child was potentially illegitimate—was later evoked by some chroniclers, the skillfulness of Louis X's brother Philip of Poitiers primarily led to the exclusion of her young daughter from the French throne.[9] While awaiting the birth of Clementia's child, Philip assumed the title of regent with the approval of the assembly of princes and barons that he had convened. At the same time, he negotiated an agreement—the Convenances (17 July 1316)—with Otto of Burgundy, who was Joan’s maternal uncle and the designated protector of her interests. The situation was a provisional one whereby the regent would govern until the child was born, at which point the government would be either maintained or modified depending on its sex. If the newborn was a boy, he would be acknowledged king, and the Count of Poitiers would remain regent until he reached the age of majority. If Clementia gave birth to a daughter, the regent would continue to govern the kingdom until Joan reached the age of 12. The official renunciation of the throne by Louis X’s daughters would then be awaited in order to determine the outcome. This implicitly acknowledged the daughters’ right to succeed their father. As such, their rights were not refuted and had to be renounced by them.[10]

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[8] Facinger, 'A Study of Medieval Queenship', 33.

[9] Ralph E. Giesey, *Le rôle méconnu de la loi salique. La succession royale XIV -XV siècles* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2007), 27–41.

The death of Louis X’s son John I on 15 November, five days after his birth, hastened the matter. Since this case had not been accounted for in the July treatise, Philip of Poitiers declared himself King of France and had himself crowned soon after on 9 January 1317. However, he rapidly met with the opposition of Joan’s grandmother Agnes of Burgundy, who publicly contested his right to the throne. In order to be able to respond to this, Philip convened an assembly composed of prelates, barons and burghers in Paris on 2 February. According to the continuator of Guillaume de Nangis’s *Chronicle*, they declared that ‘woman does not succeed to the throne’. However, the texts from the assembly have been lost, and it is not known whether this assertion is exact or if it was made after the events took place.[11]

When Philip V died in 1322 leaving only daughters, the crown was passed on to his brother Charles IV without stirring any debate. Joan of France’s disinheritance had set a precedent. When Charles IV died in 1328, however, a new crisis of succession broke out, since he had no brother to succeed him. While no one dreamed of giving the crown to a daughter, people were divided between two contenders to the throne. Philip of Valois, the last king’s first cousin, was a descendant of Philip III through the male line—although indirectly, thus introducing a ‘change of branch'. As for Edward III, King of England and Philip IV's direct grandson through his mother Isabella of France, he was the closest male heir, but through a woman. While accepted in England, the idea of female representation was rejected in France. Women could not 'faire pont et planche', meaning pass on a crown that they were prohibited from inheriting. Furthermore, Philip of Valois was a French prince. The barons declared themselves in favor of him.

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[10] Anne-Hélène Allirot, *Filles de roy de France. Princesses royales, mémoire de saint Louis et conscience dynastique (de 1270 à la fin du XIV siècle)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 37.

[11] Hercule Géraud, ed., *Chronique latine de Guillaume de Nangis de 1113 à 1300 avec les continuations de cette chronique de 1300 à 1368* (Paris: Société de l’Histoire de France, 1843), 1: 434.

Thus, in 1316, the situation was primarily about the exclusion from the crown of an infant, who was incapable of both reigning and defending his or her rights, rather than barring women from participating in royal power.[12] Disinheritance was not a question of principles—since the Convenances clearly stated the right of a king's daughter to succeed him—but, rather, a question of politics. The gender argument only followed to reinforce this. In his *Commentary on The City of God*, written in Paris under the reign of Charles IV (1322-1328), François de Meyronnes established the first distinction between private fiefs (*hereditates*) and royalty (*dignitas*), which—like biblical priesthood—was reserved for men.[13] He was nonetheless speaking generally about royal succession and did not cite any contemporary examples.

The idea was taken up by chroniclers. According to Jean le Bel, who began writing his *Chronicle* in the mid-fourteenth century, 'the kingdom of France is so noble that it must not go to a female by succession'.[14] These gendered arguments supporting exclusion were notably linked to women's relationship to the sacred. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, royal dignity had been attributed extra sanctity, the King of France being considered the 'very Christian monarch' (*rex christianissimus*) and the kingdom a divinely chosen land.[15] The king assumed a 'quasi-priestly dignity' that, according to chroniclers and theorists, could not suit the 'weaker sex'. Indeed, as early as the Carolingian period, women had been dismissed first from all sacerdotal duties and then from the sacred in general.[16] These writers held that, in ‘becoming queens’, women could not be anointed with the Holy Chrism and heal scrofula.[17] These arguments would go on to be legally reinforced after the mid-fourteenth-century rediscovery of an ancient law: Salic Law.

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[12] Fanny Cosandey, 'Avant-propos', in Giesey, *Le rôle méconnu*, 7.

[13] Jacques Krynen, *L'Empire du roi. Idées et croyances politiques en France, XIII*^{e}*-XV*^{e} *siècle* (Paris: Gallimard, 1993), 127–28; Philippe Contamine, 'Le royaume de France ne peut tomber en fille. Une théorie politique à la fin du Moyen Age', in *Institutionen und Geschischte: Theoretische Aspekte und mittelalterliche Befunde*, ed. Gerd Melville (Cologne, 1992), 187–207.

[14] 'Le royaume de France est sy noble que il ne doibt mye aller par succession a femelle.' Jules Viard and Eugène Déprez, eds., *Chronique de Jean Le Bel* (Paris: SHF, 1904), 1:90–92.

[v15] Marion Schnerb-Lièvre, *Le Songe du Vergier. Édité d'après le manuscrit 19 C IV de la British Library* (Paris: CNRS, 1982), 1:324–36.

The *lex salica* was one of the many Germanic laws written between the sixth and seventh centuries. One of its articles, the *De Allodis*, prohibited women from laying claim to familial lands (the *terra salica*), which were allotted to men (however this made no mention of the kingdom).[18] Richard Lescot, a monk at Saint-Denis and historiographer of France, is traditionally credited with the 1358 rediscovery of Salic Law in a manuscript kept in the library of his abbey.[19] His idea was to use the text at the end of a genealogy of the kings of France in order to prove the rights of the Valois over the Évreux-Navarre branch. Nonetheless, Salic Law only gradually came to circulate outside of the tight circle of power, in particular thanks to a mid-fifteenth-century treatise undoubtedly written by Guillaume Cousinot (‘La loi salique, première loi des Français’) and of which 15 manuscripts and numerous printed editions have been conserved.[20] After dismissing imperial laws and customs, the treatise evoked the author of Salic Law (Pharamond), the kings who modified it (Charlemagne), its date (420-422 CE) and its interpretation. The law ‘gave the manner for succeeding and governing in the royal land’.[21] It excluded women and their descendants from the throne, which had always been the case since Clovis’s grandfather Chlodio.[22] The author of the treatise justified the law by citing the unstable nature of women (who could choose an enemy of the kingdom for a husband) and their inability to make war or hold an office. They could, he wrote, neither be very Christian kings, nor be anointed with the Holy Ampoule, nor carry the banner and lilies.[23]

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[16] Michel Lauwers, ‘L’institution et le genre. A propos de l’accès des femmes au sacré dans l’Occident médiéval’, *Clio, Histoire, Femmes et Sociétés* 2 *: Femmes et religions* (1995): 286–89.

[17] Krynen, *L’Empire du roi*, 368.

[18] Colette Beaune, *Naissance de la nation France* (Paris: Gallimard, 1985), 267; Giesey, *Le rôle méconnu*, 84.

[19] Paris, BnF, Latin 4628 A; Beaune, *Naissance de la nation France*, 268.

[20] Giesey, *Le rôle méconnu*, 119; Craig Taylor, ed., *Debating the Hundred Years War: Pour ce que plusieurs (La loy salicque)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 54 and 58.

[21] Taylor, *Debating the Hundred Years War*, 59; Beaune, *Naissance de la nation France*, 281–83.

[22] Ibid., 281–83.

[23] Ibid.

The major historical compilations in French (Noel de Fribois's *Miroir historial* in the mid-fifteenth century and Nicole Gilles's *Annals* at the end of the fifteenth century) allowed Salic Law, which was presented as a law about succession to the kingdom and was unfavorable to the English, to reach a wider audience. It was even used as the deciding argument to justify the exclusion of women during the accession of Philip V in 1316 and Philip VI in 1328, part of a vast undertaking to rewrite the history of France that shared in the myth of Salic Law.[24] During the early sixteenth century, it had become the kingdom's law of succession, destined to ensure stability and permanency.

If queens in France could only be 'wives to the king' (queen consorts), their powers never fully available to them, what role(s) did the monarchichal system grant them? In order to define their office in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, I would first like to look at political discourses (the norm that defined their duties) before examining the reality behind their powers.

Transformations in Reginal Power: Acting in Politics

For a Normative Definition of the Queen's Political Role

The status and duties attributed to the queen were defined by normative texts, political treatises and *miroirs aux princes*. The advice these works offered queens and princesses was all the more important since these royal personages had to act as models for their subjects.[25]

Among the abundance of *miroirs* destined for women, Saint Louis's *Teachings* for his daughter, Durand de Champagne's *Miroir des dames* and Christine de Pizan's *Book of the Three Virtues* are of particular interest since they were aimed at queens or dauphines, making it possible to understand the precise duties attributed to them—at least as they appear in the discourses. To these *miroirs* should be added political treatises such as *The Game of Chess* by the Italian Dominican Jacobus de Cessolis, which describes at length how the queen was played on the chessboard as a metaphor for power—real or supposed.[26] In a long letter addressed to Isabeau of Bavaria, Christine de Pizan also detailed the duties that were inherent to her dignity.[27]

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[24] Cosandey, *La reine de France*, 21; Giesey, *Le rôle méconnu*, 151–89.

[25] Carla Casagrande, 'La femme gardée', in *Histoire des femmes. Le Moyen Age*, eds. Georges Duby, Michelle Perrot and Christiane Klapisch-Zuber (Paris: Plon, 199), 87.

Reading Saint Louis's *Teachings*, which were destined as much for his son (the future Philip III) as for his daughter (Isabella, Queen of Navarre), makes it possible to better define the realms in which each sex could intervene (in around 1267-1268).[28] Louis IX's ideal for the queen was a model of religious and moral virtue. She was supposed to love God, be charitable, attend mass and regularly confess, obey her husband, and turn away from the vanities of this world. Her good reputation was her most precious asset. The *Teachings* addressed to Saint Louis's son were altogether different, since—other than religious recommendations—they contained precious political, financial and legal advice (concerning the choice of advisors, maintaining peace, the moderation of taxes, keeping privileges and the need for equitable justice). Thus, the queen was associated with the religious sphere and the king with the realm of politics.

The metaphor of the chess game also makes it possible to address the theoretical role handed down to the female sovereign. Jacobus de Cessolis's work was translated into French by Jean de Vignay around 1340, at the request of Philip VI's wife Joan of Burgundy.[29] The author presented a two-faced queen. As an important element of chess associated with the 'dual nature of the king' when the game opens, she accompanies him for her first move but is later reduced to only advancing one square at a time. According to Jacobus de Cessolis, the female sovereign's relationship to power was complex. She borrowed from royal nature 'through grace'. By her place alongside the king, a certain amount of power and 'authority' was available to her—therefore by delegation and not by herself. But this power was limited by the 'natural feminine weakness' that restrained her in her movements and in her strength. Her essential role was ultimately to give heirs to the kingdom, and the author insisted upon her chastity.

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[26] Jacques de Cessoles, *Le livre du jeu d'échecs ou la société idéale au Moyen Âge, XIII^{e} siècle*, ed. Jean-Michel Mehl (Paris: Stock, 1995); Jean-Michel Mehl, 'La reine de l'échiquier', in *Reines et princesses au Moyen Âge* (Montpellier: Les cahiers du *CRISIMA* 5, 2001), 323–31.

[27] Josette A. Wisman, *The Epistle of the Prison of Human Life* with *An Epistle to the Queen of France and Lament on the Evils of the Civil War* (New York: Garland, 1984), 76; Angus J. Kennedy, 'Christine de Pizan's *Epistre à la reine* (1405)', *Revue des langues romanes* 92, no. 2 (1988): 256.

[28] David O'Connell, *Les propos de Saint Louis* (Paris: Gallimard Collection Archives, 1974), 181–94.

[29] Jacques de Cessoles, *Le livre du jeu d'échecs*, 180.

Other teachers and theorists were more favorable to a form of female power. The *Miroir des dames*, the French translation of Durand de Champagne's *Speculum dominarum* (1297) commissioned by Philip IV's wife Joan of Navarre, gave the female sovereign an actual place in the governance of the kingdom. As a wise queen, she had to know herself in order to govern well. As a just queen, her duty was to be a 'mirror of virtue' for her people. She was not supposed to hesitate to make her subjects respect her authority, demanding the signs of reverence that were her right. Her decisions had to be firm and definitive, and she had to surround herself with wise and experienced advisors.[30] Indeed, Joan of Navarre was not only Queen Consort, but also the heiress and titled female sovereign of important estates, the kingdom of Navarre and the county of Champagne.

The queen's complex status could also be perceived in the words of Christine de Pizan. In her open letter to Isabeau of Bavaria in 1405 as well as in the *miroir* she dedicated to Margaret of Burgundy, wife of the Dauphin Louis of Guyenne (*The Book of the Three Virtues*), the famous writer theorized about the 'profession of queen'.[31] Indeed, like other women, the queen was supposed to obey her husband. Like high-ranking princesses, she equally embodied an exemplary model of religious, moral and courtly behavior. But, in Christine de Pizan's writings, the demands of female royal duty also involved politics. Like the Virgin Mary, 'mother of all Christianity', the Queen of France was the mother of her people.[32] With the power to influence her husband, she was the advocate and protector of her subjects and had to intervene when there was dissent or simply in order to make him accept certain requests.[33] Her role as mediator was extended to the negotiation of peace treaties between enemy princes in order to serve the public good. Moreover, this essential role as 'lady of peace'[34] underlay Christine de Pizan’s epistle to Queen Isabeau asking her to intervene in the war between the Duke of Burgundy and the Duke of Orleans.[35]

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[30] Paris, BnF, Ms. Fr. 610, fol. 31 v° in Lequain, *L'éducation des femmes*, 538; Allirot, *Filles de roy de France*, 493–94.

[31] Wisman, *An Epistle*, 76; *A Medieval Woman's Mirror of Honor*, 84–85 and 120–121.

[32] Wisman, *An Epistle*, 78.

[33] 'Through charity, this great lady will be the advocate of peace between the prince, her husband (or her son, if she is a widow), and her people, those to whom she has a duty to offer her assistance. If the prince, because of poor advice or for any other reason, should be tempted to harm his subjects, they will know their lady to be full of kindness, pity, and charity. They will come to her, humbly petitioning her to intercede for them before the prince.' *A Medieval Woman's Mirror of Honor*, 85.

[34] Allirot, *Filles de roy de France*, 374.

Finally, as the mother and advocate of her people who acted in order to serve peace, her ‘profession as queen’ refers to the importance of love in politics. At the time, everyone could repeat the following well-known proverb: ‘He who is hated by his people is not lord in his country’ (*Il n’est pas sire en son pays qui de ses hommes est haï*). Without love, the prince was nothing but a tyrant.[36] Yet the female sovereign played a direct role in ensuring the circulation of love within the kingdom, through both her mediation and her duty as ‘queen of hearts’, unfurling the white cloak of charity over many territories. Beyond these traditional duties, Christine de Pizan told the queen the secrets of love in politics and lavished her with very concrete advice on how to ‘conquer hearts’.[37] In order to do so, the queen had to meet regularly with those who made public opinion, such as clerics, members of the Council, prelates and nobles, parlementarians, lawyers and people of justice. She had to make people appreciate her through both her behavior and her witty conversation. Finally, she had to strive to receive the urban elite (the principal burghers, important merchants and artisans) as well as their wives, whom she was supposed to invite to the major curial feasts. In Christine de Pizan’s writings, royalty was therefore masculine, following the model of the paternal government, but it also assumed a complementary female form in the figure of a maternal female mediator and protector.

To conclude, I would like to return to the normative part of the chess game and the movements of the pieces.[38] At the end of the fifteenth century, the queen’s powers on the chessboard increased considerably, since, now capable of moving in all directions, she found herself at the center of the game. Whether this was simply a question of enriching the game or the evocation of powerful foreign queens (such as Isabella the Catholic), this evolution perhaps corresponded to the changes the queen’s office underwent in the kingdom of France during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

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[35] Autrand, *Christine de Pizan*, 349.

[36] Josiane Barbier, Monique Cottret and Lydwine Scordia, eds., *Amour et désamour du prince. Du Haut Moyen Âge à la Révolution française* (Paris: Editions Kimé, 2011); Bénédicte Sère, *Penser l’amitié au Moyen Âge. Étude historique des commentaires sur les livres VIII et IX de l’Éthique à Nicomaque XIII*^{e}*-XV*^{e} *siècle* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 198–209.

[37] *A Medieval Woman’s Mirror of Honor*, 107–11.

[38] Mehl, ‘La reine de l’échiquier’, 327.

Queen and Auctoritas*: The Cursed Couple*

A priori, the queen did not have any real power—either governmental or decisional—at her disposal. Delegations and regencies were the only exception, but they lasted for a limited time and were in the sovereign's name alone. Royalty was masculine, to such an extent that contemporary authors employed the vocabulary of virility in order to qualify the political actions of women in power. On the subject of Isabella the Catholic, Peter Martyr of Anghiera (d. 1526) observed: 'Under her feminine envelope, meaning her female body, she has always mantained a virile spirit.'[39] According to medieval theorists and chroniclers, women in power had a 'man's heart' in a woman's body. Such permutations made it possible to not challenge the paradigm of masculine superiority.[40]

An examination of the Treasury of Charters attests firstly to the weak political role played by queens during the Late Middle Ages. Indeed, while they had had diplomatic seals since the twelfth century,[41] they essentially sealed two types of acts: religious foundations on the one hand and, on the other, the management of their dowries (when they were heiresses) and their dowers (when they were widows). They were acting then not as reigning queens making general decisions, but as lords of a principality or holders of public power in a particular situation. Among others, the charter promulgated by Philip IV and his wife Joan of Navarre in 1304 is rather revealing when it comes to the 'dual nature' of certain queens who intervened not as 'consorts', but as female 'leaders' of a particular territory. In this beautiful charter carefully written and decorated with fleurs-de-lis, the king granted the Templars free use of all the real-estate property they had acquired in the kingdom, without any taxation. Joan intervened to extend this privilege to the counties of Champagne and Brie, to which she was heiress.[42]

Reginal seals, which were ogival-shaped and not round like those of the sovereigns, were of great quality. They were all noticeably similar, depicting the queen standing in majesty, her head crowned, dressed in a long gown and vair (squirrel fur) cloak, and holding a scepter decorated with fleurs-de-lis.[43] Some constituted true masterpieces of orfevrerie—notably that of Joan of Navarre (d. 1305), on which the artist magnificently captured the grace and elegance of the then 12-year-old queen. Her coat of arms, bearing the arms of France and Navarre, was depicted on the shields hung on the pillars of the gothic bay window in the image.[44] The seals of Clementia of Hungary, Joan of Burgundy (Philip V's wife) and Joan of Évreux were inspired by it.

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[39] Lett, *Hommes et femmes au Moyen Âge*, 143–44.

[40] Colette Beaune, 'Conclusion', in *Femmes de pouvoir, femmes politiques durant les derniers siècles du Moyen Âge*, 641.

[41] Brigitte Bedos-Rezak, 'Women, Seals and Power in Medieval France, 1150-1350', in *Women and Power in the Middle Ages*, eds. Mary Erler and Maryanne Kowaleski (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1988), 61–82; Jean Dufour, 'De l'anneau sigillaire au sceau', in *Corpus des sceaux des reines et des enfants de France*, 11–25.

[42] Paris, AN, K 37c, n° 25.

At the end of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, it seems that certain queens only possessed more restrained module seals, little seals, signets and secret seals for personal use, for no large seals of majesty have ever been found for Joan of Bourbon, Marie of Anjou or Charlotte of Savoy. Furthermore, while most of them had a chancellor and a notary at their *hôtels* for sealing their acts, Marie of Anjou seems to have had no one, since her seal was kept by her first lady-in-waiting.[45] However, Isabeau of Bavaria, who played an active role in governing the kingdom, did possess a diplomatic seal,[46] as did Queen Anne, who was both Duchess of Brittany and twice sovereign.

Queens, then, did not make general governmental decisions. Neither did they participate in the Royal Council, except for a few exceptional cases when it was necessary to compensate for the king's absence. Thus, Marie of Anjou presided over the Council in the absence of Charles VII on numerous occasions. An act, dated 15 April 1434, bears the note 'by the Queen of France, lieutenant of the king in this part'.[47] Indeed, it is necessary to consider the queen's political power in her husband's absence (due to war or illness), since many obtained the lieutenancy of the kingdom for a limited amount of time (Philip VI's wife Joan of Burgundy, Isabeau of Bavaria and Marie of Anjou). One should also be wary of royal documents, which do not always reflect the reality of reginal activity. Other sources sometimes indicate that a woman participated in a given Council, even though her name was not mentioned in the official acts. Louis XI's daughter Anne of France, who governed as regent in 1483 when Charles VIII was still a minor, has vanished from the royal documents behind her brother and her husband Peter of Beaujeu, with whom she governed.[48]

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[43] Dufour, 'De l'anneau sigillaire', 11–25; Nielen, 'Figures de cire. Les sceaux des reines et des enfants de France au Moyen Âge', in *Corpus des sceaux des reines et des enfants de France*, 27–52.

[44] Jean-Luc Chassel, 'Des Thibaudiens aux Capétiens', in *Sceaux et usages de sceaux : images de la Champagne médiévale*, ed. Jean-Luc Chassel (Paris: Somogy, 2003), 48.

[45] Bernard Chevalier, 'Marie d'Anjou, une reine sans gloire, 1404-1463', in *Autour de Marguerite d'Écosse. Reines, princesses et dames du XV siècle,* eds. Geneviève and Philippe Contamine (Paris: Champion, 1999), 81-99.

[46] Nielen, 'Figures de cire', 27–52.

[47] 'Par la Royne de France, lieutenant du roy en ceste partie.' Chevalier, 'Marie d'Anjou, une reine sans gloire', 85.

Queens did not exercise any military duties. War did not and was not supposed to be associated with women, who were deemed too physically weak to fight.[49] At the end of the fourteenth century, Honoré Bonet (Bovet) echoed others in *The Tree of Battle*, saying that, due to their sex, the female holders of fiefs should not be forced to appear on the battlefield and should delegate the task to men.

A few counterexamples do exist nonetheless. These were at first literary, since the myth of the Amazons (much appreciated during the Late Middle Ages) was the subject of many representations; but they subsequently became real, since women's theoretical unfitness for war did not stop them from taking up arms. Two forms of war were in fact accessible to women. The first was the crusade. By definition, sacred war was mixed, with God calling both sexes to salvation. Indeed, while women rarely fought, they did accompany their husbands on the battlefield. High-ranking women such as Eleanor of Aquitaine, Margaret of Provence (Louis IX's wife) and Isabella of Aragon (Philip III's first wife) made the journey.

Another form of war that was accessible to women was the siege. According to Froissart, during the Siege of Hennebont by the King of France's troops in 1342, Joan of Flanders, Countess of Montfort and ally of the English, played an active role. She rode through the streets on horseback, calling on men and women to defend the town. Seeing the French camp empty from high up in a watchtower, she was said to have led a sortie herself to set fire to it.[50] Some chronicles also mentioned the military intervention of a queen, Joan of Navarre, who came to defend her county of Champagne against the attacks of the Duke of Bar, Henry III (1297).[51] She was victorious, intervening in person to menace all those who tried to flee with hanging: 'And the lady climbed on a large destrier

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[48] Aubrée David-Chapy, 'Anne de France et Louise de Savoie : du gouvernement à la régence. La construction d'un pouvoir au féminin entre fin du Moyen Âge et première Renaissance' (PhD diss., Université Paris-IV, 2014).

[49] Beaune, *Jeanne d'Arc*, 169–73.

[50] Ibid., 169–73; Lett, *Hommes et femmes*, 141.

[51] *Chronique normande du XIV*^{e} *siècle*, in Elisabeth Lalou, 'Le gouvernement de la reine Jeanne', *Cahiers Haut-Marnais* 67 (1986): 16–30.

… . Yet began the heavy and tough battle; and when there were some who fled, the queen had them hung.’[52] Whatever the truth may be about this rather uncertain episode (in reality, it was Gaucher de Châtillon, Constable of Champagne, who was victorious), the chronicles offered the picture of a warrior queen who, despite being a woman, did her duty as feudal lord under the title ‘Countess of Champagne’.[53] Such episodes were rare. Except for Joan of Arc, who was ‘war chief’ on the battlefield, women did not lead offensive wars.

The Intercession of the Queen: Justice and Peace

Although she could not govern, the queen nonetheless had special duties when it came to royal policy. She seconded her husband in specific mediation missions, which saw her acting in favor of justice and peace.

Justice, the first of the three royal duties and the sovereign’s exclusive domain, was wielded by the queen through a specific right: the right to pardon. During the Early Middle Ages, the holy queens had already—miraculously—obtained the liberation of prisoners.[54] During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, a female sovereign exercised this right to pardon in a ritualized manner during her first entry in a town. In doing so, she reproduced a royal act that fully associated her with sovereign power. John II the Good’s second wife Joan of Boulogne did this on numerous occasions. During her first entry in the town of Noyon on 20 July 1356, she thus had ‘to absolve and deliver all the prisoners … by our royal right for our joyous accession’.[55] During her first entry in Paris in 1483, Anne of Beaujeu wanted the prisoners of the Conciergerie to be freed, but her right to pardon was refused by the Parlement of Paris on the grounds that only the king, the queen and the dauphin had this right.[56]

The role of women in peacekeeping was equally essential. From ancient Greece to modern times, women have continually been attributed pacifying virtues, as portrayed in literature. In Aristophanes's *Lysistrata*, the assembly of Greek women decided to abstain from lovemaking in order to make the war stop.[57] In the Medieval West, this duty was founded on the biblical models of Esther, who reestablished harmony between two enemy kings,[58] and the Virgin of Mercy, the ultimate divine intercessor.[59] Furthermore, woman seemed by her very nature to bear peace. Indeed, she embodied the essential virtues of gentleness and mercy: 'Men by nature are more foolhardy and headstrong … . But woman by nature is more gentle and circumspect. Therefore, if she has sufficient will and wisdom she can provide the best possible means to pacify man.'[60] The queen's diplomatic role was thus part of the inherent responsibilities of her station. According to the lovely phrase employed by Christine de Pizan in her *Epistle to the Queen*, 'it behooves a high princess and lady to be the mediator of a peace treaty'.[61]

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[52] ‘Et la dame monta sur un grant destrier … . Or commencha la bataille forte et rude; et quant il y avoit aucuns qui s’enfuioit, la royne le faisoit pendre.’ Baron Joseph Kervyn de Lettenhove, ed., *Istore et chroniques de Flandres* (Brussels: F. Hayez, 1880), 1:219.

[53] Beaune, *Jeanne d’Arc*, 163–66.

[54] Allirot, *Filles de roy de France*, 406–7.

[55] ‘Absodre et delivrer tous prisonniers … de nostre droit royal pour cause de nostre joyeux avenement.’ Paris, AN, JJ 80, nº 7271.

[56] At the time, she was going fetch young Margaret of Austria for her engagement to the Dauphin Charles.

The most famous example of reginal intercession, described by Jean le Bel and Froissart, remains that of the burghers of Calais. The episode occurred during the Hundred Years War in 1347, in a village that had been besieged by King Edward III and the English troops for many months. The starving population ended up capitulating, especially since the emergency army sent by Philip VI of Valois had to retreat. That is when the events of the well-known myth (which was illustrated in the nineteenth century by the splendid monument sculpted by Rodin) is said to have taken place. On 4 August, six shoeless burghers dressed only in shirts presented themselves before Edward III saying they were ready to sacrifice their lives if the king would pardon their rebel town. The king's pregnant wife Philippa of Hainault, in tears, threw herself at his feet and implored him to be merciful. The burghers were granted pardon by the king, who is said to have declared: 'Ha! lady, I would have liked it better if you were from somewhere else than here. You beg me so strongly that I do not dare refuse you.'[62] While this story is misleading, transforming a heroic act into a classic ritual of urban capitulation, it portrays the real model of the queen as 'intercessor', mediator of harmony and peace (an intercession that was all the more effective since Philippa was pregnant, guaranteeing the perpetuation of the family line). For the intercession to be effective, queens submitted to the public language of negotiation by begging and imploring on their knees. Their intervention cannot, however, be reduced to mere acts, since their mediation was also verbal. Princesses knew how to use words and arguments to appease people. According to Christine de Pizan, 'gentleness and humility assuage the prince. The gentle tongue (which means the soft word) bends and breaks harshness'.[63]

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[57] Nicolas Offenstadt, 'Les femmes et la paix à la fin du Moyen Âge : genre, discours, rites', in *Le règlement des conflits au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2001), 317; ibid., *Faire la paix au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Odile Jacob, 2007).

[58] Jean-Marie Moeglin, ed., *L'intercession du Moyen Âge à l'époque moderne. Autour d'une pratique sociale* (Geneva: Droz, 2004); Allirot, *Filles de roy de France*, 374–94; and Jean Devaux, 'A vostre priere et parole il en vauldra grandement mieulx: images de la médiatrice dans les *Chroniques* de Froissart', in *Femmes de pouvoir, femmes politiques durant les derniers siècles du Moyen Âge et au cours de la première Renaissance*, eds. Eric Bousmar et al. (Bruxelles: De Boeck, 2012), 601-14.

[59] Millet and Rabel, *La Vierge au Manteau du Puy-en-Velay.*

[60] *A Medieval Woman's Mirror of Honor*, 86.

[61] Wisman, *An Epistle*, 77. 'The proper role of a good, wise queen or princess is to maintain peace and concord and to avoid wars and their resulting disasters'. *A Medieval Woman's Mirror of Honors*, 86.

Far from being a simple topos, this Queen of England's intervention in favor of peace was well attested to from the mid-thirteenth century onward.[64] Throughout the Hundred Years War, queens and princesses equally made verbal attempts to pacify both the rivalry between the French and the English as well as the internal conflicts within the kingdom of France. Joan of Valois, both sister to the King of France (Philip VI) and mother of the Queen of England (Philippa), thus led a whole series of negotiations between 1337 and 1340 in order to establish harmony between the two warring kingdoms. Proving her perseverance, she went from one camp to the other so frequently that she obtained a meeting between both parties (the Truce of Esplechin was signed in 1340).[65]

Women played an even more central role on the diplomatic chessboard, since, through marriage, they found themselves at the heart of relationships of power between two lineages. Union in itself was already seen as a possible factor for reconciliation. By the ties she maintained with her original lineage, the female sovereign was subsequently the vector of

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[62] 'Ha ! dame, Je amaisse mieulx que vous fuissiés d'autre part que ci. Vous me priiés si acertes (fortement) que je ne le vous ose escondire.' Jean-Marie Moeglin, *Les bourgeois de Calais. Essai sur un mythe historique* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2002).

[63] *A Medieval Woman's Mirror of Honors*, 86.

[64] John Carmi Parsons, 'Ritual and Symbol in the English Medieval Queenship to 1500', in *Women and Sovereignty*, ed. Louise Olga Fradenbourg (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1992), 60–77; Parsons, 'The Intercessory Patronage of Queens Margaret and Isabella of France', in *Thirteenth Century England*, eds. Michael Prestwich, Richard H. Britnell and Robin Frame (Suffolk: Woodbridge, 1997), 145–56.

[65] Offenstadt, 'Les femmes et la paix', 332.

amicitia and could use her relations to play a real diplomatic role. During the second half of the fourteenth century, the conflict opposing the King of France and Charles of Navarre was also the context for the diplomatic intervention of two dowager queens: Joan of Évreux and Blanche of Navarre, respectively Charles's aunt and sister. After the assassination of the Constable Charles of Spain by the Navarre brothers, war seemed imminent. Both queens intervened before John II in order to obtain Charles of Navarre's pardon in exchange for his submission. A peace treaty was signed in Valognes on 10 September 1355.[66] Two years later, the conflict resumed. All of the encounters between the dauphin (the future Charles V) and Charles of Navarre in Paris between 1357 and 1358 were marked by attempts at permanent reconciliation undertaken by Joan of Évreux and made official by the king, who granted her 'power, authority and special mandament to treat the aforementioned disagreements …. And also to give truces, abstentions, safe conduct'.[67] A magnificent illumination inserted in the manuscript of the *Grandes Chroniques de France* made for Charles V portrays the two queens' pacifying role. In it, they are depicted side by side, introducing Charles of Navarre near King John II in order to receive his pardon.[68] Contemporary chroniclers such as Jean de Venette and Pierre d'Orgemont also lauded the queens' repeated efforts to reestablish harmony, whether personally, by letter or by interposed ambassadors.[69] Joan of Évreux, perpetual ambassadress of peace, was nonetheless distinguished from Blanche of Navarre, who was above all the protector of the Navarrese side.

The virtue of harmony also characterized Queen Isabeau of Bavaria. On numerous occasions, she attempted to establish peace within the kingdom of France, which was torn apart by the conflict between her brother-in-law Louis of Orleans and the Duke of Burgundy (Philip the Bold and, from 1404, John the Fearless).[70] After his first bout of madness in 1392,

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[66] Jean Favier, *La guerre de Cent Ans* (Paris: Fayard, 1980), 154–55.

[67] 'Pouvoir, auctorité et mandement special de traictier sur les descors [discordes] dessus dit … . Et aussi de donner trieves, abstinences, saulfs conduits.' Paris, AN, J 616, n° 9.

[68] Paris, BnF, Fr. 2813, fol. 395.

[69] Cazilhac, *Jeanne d'Évreux, Blanche de Navarre*; Philippe Charon, *Princes et principautés au Moyen Âge : l'exemple de la principauté d'Évreux, 1298-1412* (PhD diss., Université Paris I, 2006).

[70] Bernard Guenée, *Un meurtre, une société. L'assassinat du duc d'Orléans, 23 novembre 1407* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992), 161–62; Rachel Gibbons, 'Les conciliatrices au bas Moyen

Charles VI only governed intermittently, leaving both rival camps free to clash. Louis of Orleans demanded his right to participate more actively in the government, since he was the king's brother and his closest relative; furthermore, Charles VI had officially named him regent in the case of royal minority. The king's uncle Philip the Bold, on the other hand, had a great deal of political experience. He had governed the kingdom on a few occasions, first during the king's minority (1380-1388) and then following his first bouts of madness. The crisis grew vicious in December 1401, when each of the dukes wanted to monopolize the governance of finances. Isabeau intervened as arbiter. As early as 14 January 1402, she ordered 'that these two lords who are so close and so closely related … be hereafter good, undivided, true and loyal friends together'.[71] She imposed herself on the diplomatic scene as a woman (whose role as pacifier seemed 'natural') and as a sovereign associated with royal dignity, which the king could no longer exercise and which placed her above each party. The January 1393 order had granted her the tutelage of the children of France in the case of minority, which granted her a legitimate place on the political chessboard.

Her role as mediator was officially acknowledged two months later on 16 March 1402, when Charles VI granted her 'full power and authority' to intervene between the princes in the event of his 'absence', meaning if he was suffering from madness. It was a matter of responding to the particular problem posed by the necessity of keeping Pope Benedict XIII in Avignon. She was supposed to do so either by 'amicable means' (meaning diplomatic) or, if that was not possible, by legal means. However, she did not act alone and was helped by the princes of the blood John of Berry and Louis of Bourbon.

The crisis worsened when Philip the Bold died in June 1404. John the Fearless wanted to maintain his prerogatives within the kingdom's government, but he was now only the king's first cousin. Within the tight circle of royal kinship, John the Fearless no longer had either the appeal or the right.[72] He used force, arriving near Paris accompanied by a few thousand armed men in August 1405. Faced with this threat, the queen

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Âge : Isabeau de Bavière et la guerre civile', in *La guerre, la violence et les gens au Moyen Âge. II. La violence et les gens*, eds. Philippe Contamine and Olivier Guyotjeannin (Paris: CTHS, 1996), 23–34; and Adams, *The Life and Afterlife*, 166–92.

[71] 'Que iceulx deux seigneurs qui sont si prochains et se attiennent si prez de lignage … soient doresenavant bons, entiers, vrays et loyaulx amis ensemble.' Guenée, *Un meurtre, une société*, 161.

[72] Ibid., 166.

and the Duke of Orleans, who were now allies, abruptly left the capital and headed for Melun (17 August). The Dauphin Louis of Guyenne was supposed to join them the next day. As a source of legitimacy, he represented an essential element among both parties. Since the 1393 order, Isabeau was his guardian, but John the Fearless was his stepfather (Louis of Guyenne had married Margaret of Burgundy). Having been warned that the dauphin had left Paris, John the Fearless hurried after him and brought him back to the capital (19 August). Throughout the month of September, a clash seemed inevitable. Negotiations under the aegis of the queen did not begin until early October. In her epistle to Isabeau on 5 October, Christine de Pizan called for her mediation. On 12 October, a royal order granted the queen a new official role, whereby, if a conflict arose, the queen—assisted by the princes of the blood and the royal advisors—had the power to 'appease it by legal means or amicable means'. On 17 October, the Dukes of Orleans and Burgundy swore to live in peace from then on. The Monk of Saint-Denis recounted that they took an oath 'in the presence of the queen and the Duke of Berry'.[73]

Isabeau of Bavaria remained a central figure in the peace negotiations until 1411, when her son, the Dauphin Louis, reached the age of majority and took over the governance of the kingdom. The queen's beautiful account books, which are held at the French National Archives, attests to her efforts to pacify the conflict. Indeed, in order to remunerate the messengers, each letter that Isabeau sent was recorded with the date and the recipient. The correspondence, however, has not been conserved. Thus, for the months between July and December 1401 alone, she sent 33 letters that were destined for her close family (her daughter Isabella, Queen of England) as well as for prelates (the Bishops of Chartres and Senlis) and royal advisors (the Count of Harcourt, Gilles Mallet, Sire of Graville, and Marshal Boucicaut). But most of them were sent in an uninterrupted exchange with the princes of the blood—the Dukes of Burgundy, Orleans and Berry—in order to attempt a mediation.[74] Nonetheless, the queen's diplomatic success was temporary and fragile, so acute was the rivalry between the princes—who had constituted actual parties not inclined to negotiate and whose rivalry resulted in the assassination of the Duke of Orleans on 23 November 1407.[75]

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[73] Ibid., 167.

[74] Paris, AN, KK 45, fol. 108.

[75] Adams, *The Life and Afterlife*, 166–92.

Thus, while real power was always considered in masculine terms, diplomacy offered women one of the spheres of action that allowed them to escape the limits imposed by their state and to go from being passive intermediaries to active mediators. Other women played an important pacifying role, including Isabella of Portugal, Duchess of Burgundy, who intervened at the highest level by negotiating the exact terms of treaties (as she did in 1439 during the conference at Gravelines).[76]

Some reservations should be expressed concerning this optimistic observation. At the end of the Middle Ages, diplomacy became an increasingly specialized affair. It was professionalized and therefore masculinized.[77] Furthermore, far from acting as ‘ladies of peace’, certain queens and princesses were the source of prolonged discord and conflict, such as Isabella of France (daughter of Philip the Fair and wife of Edward II, King of England), who played a hazy role in the early fourteenth century. While she came to France accompanied by her son in 1325 as part of an attempt to preserve peace between both countries, she also organized the downfall and assassination of her husband. She went from embodying the ideal of a queen of peace to becoming a potential tyrant figure.[78] Blanche of Navarre, who was lauded as a ‘peace negotiator’ on various occasions, played an opaque role, favoring her brother Charles of Navarre over the king. Others took care of avenging assassinated husbands, such as Louis of Orleans’s widow Valentina Visconti, who did not cease to call for justice until her death in 1408.[79] Franco-English marriages during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries ultimately proved to be rather ineffective when it came to regulating conflict. Catherine of France, Charles VI and Isabeau’s daughter, was unable to help unite both kingdoms, while Margaret of Anjou did not manage to put an end to Francophobia in England.[80]

‘The Queen, Mother of the People’

Reginal mediation went beyond simply diplomatic invervention. Female sovereigns had always had the more or less discreet power to influence the king, but this role was only regarded as official in the *miroirs* and political treatises from the end of the thirteenth century onward. In the *Speculum dominarum* (1297), Durand de Champagne, Queen Joan of Navarre's confessor, encouraged her for the first time to intercede before her husband Philip IV the Fair.[81] In the epistle addressed to Isabeau in 1405, Christine de Pizan in turn theorized about the necessity of reginal mediation, beyond simply arbitrating for peace: 'Just as the Queen of Heaven, Mother of God, is called mother of all Christendom, so must be said and called any wise and good queen, mother and comforter, advocate of her subjects and her people'.[82]

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[76] Monique Sommé, *Isabelle de Portugal, duchesse de Bourgogne. Une femme au pouvoir au XV^e^ siècle* (Lille: Septentrion, 1998), 385–87.

[77] Françoise Autrand et al., eds. *Histoire de la diplomatie française*, vol. 1, *Du Moyen Âge à l’Empire* (Paris: Perrin, 2007).

[78] Allirot, *Filles de roy de France*, 386.

[79] Offenstadt, ‘Les femmes et la paix à la fin du Moyen Âge’, 317.

[80] Gibbons, ‘Les conciliatrices au bas Moyen Âge’, 25.

The queen was clearly likened to the Virgin Mary. Indeed, the image of Mary contributed to creating the concept of the 'mediating queen'.[83] Throughout the Middle Ages, the role of the Christian God—who was also the God of implacable justice—as protecting father had largely been invested by the Virgin Mary. Her divine maternity established her status as supreme mediator, to whom her Son could refuse nothing.[84] She became the advocate of Humanity, the 'mother of mercy' for all Christianity. The iconography of the Lady of the Cape, which began to develop in the early fourteenth century, further accentuated the idea of universal protection.

Like the Queen of Heaven, the earthly queen was supposed to intercede for all her people, from the highest dignitary to the humblest layperson and cleric. Since she had the power to influence her husband, she was supposed to be the advocate and protector of her subjects, intervening during disagreements in order to maintain peace (her primary role) or more simply to make him accept certain requests. This intercession was all the more important during the Late Middle Ages since the distance between the king and his subjects had grown, due to the very majesty of his power as well as to the progression of state centralization.[85] Access to the king was regulated and requests filtered, making intercession necessary. The queen was one of the possible intermediaries, along with princes and advisors (among others), between the monarch and his subjects.

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[81] Beaune, 'Conclusion', in *Femmes de pouvoir, femmes politiques*, 641.

[82] Wisman, *An Epistle*, 79.

[83] John Carmi Parsons, 'The Queen's Intercession in Thirteenth-Century England', in *Power of the Weak: Studies on Medieval Women*, eds. Jennifer Carpenter and Sally-Beth MacLean (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 126–77.

[84] Millet and Rabel, *La Vierge au Manteau*, 63–68.

[85] Claude Gauvard, 'Conclusions', in *L'intercession du Moyen Âge à l'époque moderne*, ed. Jean-Marie Moeglin, 343.

Numerous written acts attest to what individuals and communities concretely sought from his mediation. Pontifical correspondence shows that on numerous occasions the Holy See communicated directly with the queen in order to obtain her intervention, notably during the Franco-English conflict. In 1339, Benedict XII wrote to Joan of Évreux and her daughter Blanche, Duchess of Orleans, in response to their letter and in order to bring about harmony between the two enemy kings. Similarly, the day after the battle of Crécy (26 August 1346), Clement VI wrote to Philip VI's wife Joan of Burgundy in order to enjoin her to favor a return to peace through her prayers.[86] The entreaties were reciprocal. By appealing to her husband Philip VI and the papacy, Joan of Burgundy skillfully negotiated the promotion of certain Burgundian clerics. In 1343, she obtained from the king, who acted 'upon the request of our very dear companion', a property and financial allocation for Clement VI's brother William Roger; the following year, she obtained from the pope the cardinal's hat for Pierre Bertrand the Younger.[87] These were classic epistolary exchanges and, among others during the thirteenth century, were attested to by the rich correspondence conserved between the pope and Queen Margaret of Provence.[88]

Customarily, the female sovereign would equally intervene on behalf of ecclesiastical and urban communities. The first written intercessions that have been mentioned date back to the end of the sixth century, when Brunhilda along with her grandson Theuderic II wrote to Pope Gregory I *per scripta* in favor of religious establishments in Autun.[89] The diplomatic acts studied by Jean Dufour show that, from the early ninth century to the early twelfth century, female sovereigns did not cease to intercede before their husbands and sons in favor of abbeys and churches. At the end of the fourteenth century, the canons of Notre-Dame Cathedral turned to Isabeau of Bavaria for her support of their requests.[90]

Urban communities did the same when they wanted to obtain a privilege or fiscal relief. The queen's intercession could be demonstrative and theatrical, equalling the supplications for peace mentioned earlier. In August 1390, following a violent storm that had struck the royal palace (a sign of divine wrath), Isabeau of Bavaria begged her husband on her knees to renounce a heavy tax, which had caused her people to suffer.[91] Beyond these standard interventions, female sovereigns also acted concretely for communities. On 27 January 1398, Isabeau wrote to the Abbess of Longchamp to request that the charges and fees that had been weighing on the inhabitants of the town of Antony be reduced.[92]

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[86] Allirot, *Filles de roy de France*, 450.

[87] 'À la priere de nostre tres chiere compaigne.' Ibid., 478.

[88] Champollion-Figeac, *Lettres des rois, reines et autres personnages des cours de France et d'angleterre* (Paris: Imprimerie royale, 1839), vol. I.

[89] Jean Dufour, 'De l'anneau sigillaire au sceau', 11–25.

[90] Thank you to Claude Gauvard for providing me with this information.

It is true that, due to her husband's 'absences', Isabeau had an exceptional amount of power, and her sphere of intervention was perhaps larger than that of other female sovereigns. But such power to intercede is evident well beyond Isabeau's reign. In December 1460, the Bishop of Le Mans wrote Marie of Anjou a letter of support in favor of a young girl from his town: Jeanne Marie La Féronne, the Maid of Le Mans (*la Pucelle du Mans*), who was inspired by God. The queen's intervention was effective. In the spring of 1461, the Maid was received and examined by the Royal Council and the Archbishop of Tours.[93]

Heiress Queens and Dowager Queens: The Territorial Inscription of Reginal Power

While queens did not wield general institutional power, they could nonetheless manage estates as heiresses or dowager widows. In this case, they were acting not as sovereigns, but as 'lords' of a principality. The well-known example of Mahaut, heiress to the county of Artois, attests to the excellence of female governance.[94] The countess fought on every front, both in the king's court and within her principality—particularly against her nephew Robert of Artois. As Countess of Artois, she even obtained the title and related role of peer of France, in this respect supporting the crown donned by King Philip V at his coronation (January 1317). During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, some female sovereigns, such as Joan of Navarre and Anne of Brittany, also wielded political power over specific territories, managing the principalities they had inherited alongside the king. So how was the power shared? Did heiress queens really govern, as Mahaut of Artois did in her principality?

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[91] Gibbons, 'The Piety of Isabeau', 222.

[92] Paris, AN, K 54 n° 57 (1398, Paris).

[93] Beaune, *Jeanne d'Arc*, 375.

[94] Christelle Balouzat-Loubet, *Mahaut d'Artois, une femme de pouvoir* (Paris: Perrin, 2015).

Were Heiress Queens Women in Power?

Principalities were given to the heiress princess and were only reunited with the crown when she died, being passed on to one of her children (generally the eldest). The kingdom of Navarre and the counties of Champagne and Brie were thus given to the future Louis X when Queen Joan died in 1305; the duchy of Brittany was first passed on to Claude of France, Anne of Brittany's daughter, before being definitively incorporated in the crown in 1532.

But was the management of familial land the queen's responsibility as heiress or that of her husband? The answer is a complex one and varies according to the period being examined and the queen's personality. The county of Champagne remained Joan of Navarre's property, but its management was shared.[95] Legally, a husband was master of his wife's property. He governed her assets, of which he was the 'administrator and usufructuary', according to the *Grand Coutumier* (a legal compilation written in the fourteenth century). Thus, Philip IV assumed the management of the county, while the queen, as 'natural lord' intervened alongside him, approving and sealing with her own seal—in addition to the great royal seal—a certain number of acts, particularly permanent acts, charters and letters patent. She notably approved gifts and exchanges of land and revenue and confirmed the granting of exemptions and privileges to towns. However, mandaments (administrative acts through which the king gave orders to his agents) fell exclusively under Philip IV's jurisdiction. Similarly, the Grands Jours of Troyes, which heard appeals concerning cases settled by bailiffs, was run by people from the royal administration. Ultimately, although the queen was indeed the natural lord of the principality (and, accompanied by her husband, she went there on numerous occasions for relatively long visits), the king was the principal administrator.

Two centuries later, Anne, heiress to the duchy of Brittany, became Queen of France. As the duchy had suffered a military defeat, the marriage contract she signed with Charles VIII was not in her favor. Although the duchy's privileges had indeed been confirmed (with Brittany maintaining its statutes and—notably fiscal—privileges), the couple mutually donated their rights. The king governed alone, having available revenue and controlling the management of the duchy by naming the principal officers from among his followers.[96] While Anne had not severed all ties to Brittany, as the requests addressed to her by burghers of certain towns attest, she was nonetheless reduced to a secondary role. Between 1491 and 1498, she was above all Queen of France, marvelously playing the role that had been assigned to her by bearing the children of France, embodying royal majesty during major public ceremonies and animating courtly society.

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[95] Lalou, 'Le gouvernement de la reine Jeanne', 18–30.

Following the death of Charles VIII, Anne once more became sovereign of her duchy. For her second marriage, to Louis XII (celebrated in 1499), the marriage contract was more favorable to her for numerous reasons. She was now Dowager Queen of France and no longer surrounded by military defeat. Louis XII no longer had any pretext for claiming the duchy. Husband and wife were also far from being enemies, since Louis of Orleans had fought in the Breton army in 1488. In order for the name of the principality not to be abolished, as had been the case for Burgundy a few years earlier, it was granted that 'the second male child or daughter, in the absence of a male … will be and will remain prince of the said country to enjoy and use it as the dukes and their predecessors were accustomed to doing'.[97] This clause technically released the duchy from direct incorporation into the kingdom when the queen died.

In April 1498, Anne had re-established the Breton chancery, which had been suppressed by Charles VIII. As early as the first months of his reign, Louis XII committed himself to acknowledging the validity of the nominations that she had decided, notably the restitution of the duty of chancellor to Philip of Montauban. In January 1499, he confirmed the duchy's statutes and customs as well as the privileges of the nobility and the clergy. The king could not levy taxes without first obtaining the consent of the states of Brittany.

Nominations for the duchy's institutional duties were done in the name of the queen, who placed Bretons in numerous roles, but they were always approved by the king.[98] In 1505, she undertook a three-month tour of Brittany. The journey corresponded to ambitions at once religious (a pilgrimage to the region’s principal sanctuaries) and political (to reaffirm her place as the duchy’s sovereign).[99] Thus, Anne managed to reconcile her dual identity as Queen of France and Duchess of Brittany, which was expressed in both the sigillography and her choice of burial place. Her great seal as queen (1498?) was exceptional since it combined sigillographical attributes specific to the Dukes of Brittany (round seal depicting her seated on the throne with a raised sword) and royalty (Fig. 4.1: scepter, surcoat and parament cloak with coat of arms, fleurs-de-lis and ermine).[100]

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[96] Le Page, 'Qu'est-ce-qu'Anne de Bretagne connaissait de son duché ?' in *Anne de Bretagne*, 25; Didier Le Fur, *Anne de Bretagne : miroir d'une reine, historiographie d'un mythe* (Paris: Guénégaud, 2000).

[97] 'Le second enfant masle ou fille à deffault de masle … seront et demeureront prince du dit pays pour en jouir et user comme ont de coustume faire les ducs ses prédécesseurs.' Le Fur, *Anne de Bretagne*, 153.

[98] Ibid., 152.

Similarly, when she died in January 1514, Anne was buried according to her wishes as Queen of France at Saint-Denis and as Duchess of Brittany in Nantes, her heart laid to rest in her parents’ tomb among the Carmelites of Nantes.

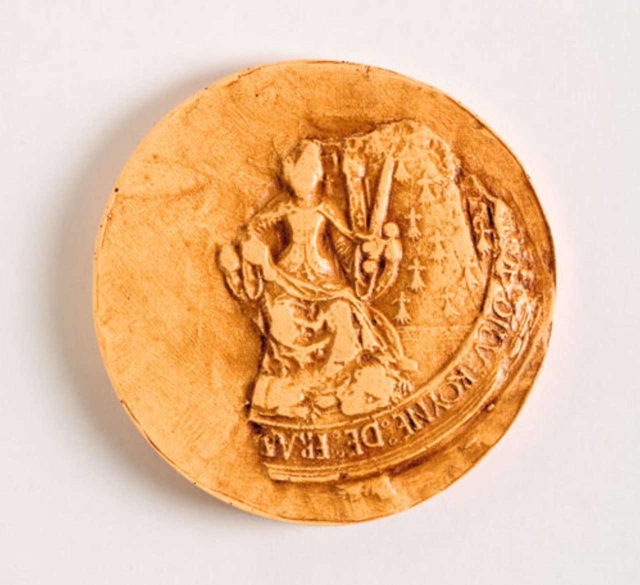

Fig. 4.1 Seal of Anne of Brittany, Queen of France (1498?), round seal, fragment measuring 75 mm. This seal was molded using an original impression loaned by Mr. Ronan de Chef du Bos in 1933.

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[99] Le Page, ‘Qu’est-ce-qu’Anne de Bretagne connaissait de son duché ?’ 26.

[100] *Corpus des sceaux*, 116.

However, we should be careful of anachronism here, for such acts did not signify a fierce desire to conserve the duchy's independence. They simply attested to Anne's attachment to the principality, and made public acknowledgment of her ducal title (desired by Louis XII) possible. Nothing was done without the king's desire and consent. He, along with his presumed successor Francis of Angoulême (the future Francis I), was the one who organized her funeral in both Paris and Nantes.[101] He was paying homage to both the Queen of France and the Duchess of Brittany, reminding people that the principality's incorporation in the crown had become inevitable with her death.[102]

The Governance of Dowager Queens: Women as 'Lords'

There was no specific status for dowager queens. While being a widow and the mother of the children of France could be a potential asset when it came to obtaining the regency, there was no guarantee of this.[103] Certain queen mothers certainly did act as regents for their sons (Blanche of Castile), while others had no political power (Charlotte of Savoy). As for Isabeau of Bavaria, she governed the kingdom because the king had been 'prevented' from doing so (due to madness), but she lost all power as dowager queen, withdrawing from public life (1422).[104]

Those dowager queens who did not have children (Clementia of Hungary) or sons able to succeed to the throne (Joan of Évreux and Blanche of Navarre) divided their time between their Parisian residences, where they participated in courtly life, and the castles that were part of their inheritances or dowers. Thus, Clementia of Hungary most frequently resided in Paris at the Hôtel du Temple, which was given to her by Philip V in 1317 (as compensation for the revenue promised by Louis X). She also made several stays in Provence at her familial estate (1318-1320) and in Corbeil, the capital of her dower. Joan of Évreux and Blanche of Navarre played important roles in the kingdom's political affairs, not thanks to their status as dowager queen but because marriage enabled them to establish ties between two competing families.

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[101] Pierre-Gilles Girault, *Les funérailles d'Anne de Bretagne, reine de France. L'Hermine regrettée* (Montreuil: Gourcuff Gradenigo, 2014), 13.

[102] Chapter 6. Nassiet, 'Les reines héritières', 138.

[103] Cazilhac, 'Le douaire', in *Reines et princesses au Moyen Âge*, 79.

[104] Chapter 5.

Most female sovereigns during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were dowager queens for relatively long periods of time, as was the case for Clementia of Hungary (1316-1328), Philip V’s widow Joan of Burgundy (1322-1330), Joan of Évreux (1328-1371), Blanche of Navarre (1350-1398), Isabeau of Bavaria (1422-1435) and Marie of Anjou (1461-1463), though not for Charlotte of Savoy (August-December 1483) and Anne of Brittany (for a few months between 1498 and 1499—she continued to receive her dower following her remarriage to Louis XII[105]). Some, such as Joan of Évreux, had much difficulty obtaining all of the land that had been promised to them in their marriage contracts.[106] When their husbands died, they had to ask the new monarch for authorization to make use of their property, and the king was relatively willing to satisfy them.

The queens did not have their dower freehold but only in usufruct, but could manage it freely. Like all lords, they named the officers who would manage their property, and had cens, revenues and other taxes collected, although the military sphere nonetheless remained reserved for the king. This governance made it necessary to have a large body of officers. Heading the administration was a bailiff chosen by the female sovereign. Blanche of Navarre chose Jean le Serrurier, Charles of Navarre’s former bailiff (in Évreux). The collector handled revenue from the domains.[107] Indeed, dowagers collected substantial revenues from their estates, the agricultural and legal value of the castellanies being supplemented by their economic value thanks to tolls and other taxes on trade.[108] They also possessed the rights of high, middle and low justice.[109] Sentences and procedures could vary depending on the regions, since not all territories followed the same customs. In Blanche of Navarre’s dower, the castellany of Pontoise followed the same custom as Senlis, while other lands followed that of Normandy. Widow queens thus had important estates, which they ran autonomously and which allowed them to live according to their rank.

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[105] Cazilhac, ‘Le douaire’, 78.

[106] Elisabeth A.R. Brown, ‘Royal Marriage, Royal Property, and the Patrimony of the Crown: Inalienability and the Prerogative in Fourteenth-Century France’, *Humanities, Working Paper* 70 (1982): 1–41.

[107] Cazilhac, ‘Le douaire’, 84.

[108] Ibid., 78.

[109] Ibid., 85.

Dowager queens also enjoyed unequalled prestige at court, which was expressed both by the specific rank they were given during important curial feasts and the place they held as 'living memories' of aulic ceremonies. Blanche of Navarre's advice was sought concerning the ritual to be followed for the crowning of Queen Isabeau of Bavaria in Paris in 1389, a ritual that Blanche largely determined.[110]

Chroniclers also retained the exemplary lives these women led within their Parisian and provincial *hôtels*, where they lived as 'semi-recluses', consecrating much of their time to prayer and devotions (in the image of the prophetess Anne). According to the Monk of Saint-Denis, Blanche of Navarre dedicated part of her life to protecting those who were the weakest (widows, orphans and the poor), so much so that her *hôtel* was more like a 'cloister for the devout than a queen's palace'.[111] Their widowhood was visible in the adornments they wore, which included a white wimple covering the hair all the way to the forehead and the neck all the way to the chin.

Joan of Évreux's widowhood, which lasted 43 years, was equally marked by great piety. As the third wife of the last Capetian king, Charles IV the Fair (her first cousin),[112] she could not give him the long-awaited male heir, instead giving birth to three daughters: Joan, who died at the age of three (in 1328), Marie (d. 1341) and Blanche, the future Duchess of Orleans (d. 1393), with whom she was pregnant when the king died. As queen, her name has primarily remained associated with the famous book of hours that Charles IV offered her, in which the miniatures painted by Jean Pucelle depicted the major episodes of Christ's childhood (from the Annunciation to the Flight into Egypt) and the Passion (from his arrest to his resurrection).[113] She primarily asserted her power and position at court as dowager queen. It should be noted that she saw three kings succeed to the throne of France before she died in 1371. Together with her niece Blanche of Navarre, she played a mediating role within the conflict opposed the kings Jean II (and then Charles V) to Charles of Navarre between 1355 and 1365. The Hôtel de Navarre, where she resided in

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[110] *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denys*, 611.

[111] Brigitte Buettner, 'Le système des objets dans le testament de Blanche de Navarre', *Clio*, *Femmes et images* 19 (2004).

[112] Anne-Hélène Allirot, 'L'entourage et l'Hôtel de Jeanne d'Évreux, reine de France (1324-1371)', *Annales de Bretagne et des pays de l'Ouest* 116, no. 1 (2009): 169–81.

[113] Joan A. Holladay, 'The Education of Jeanne d'Évreux: Personal Piety and Dynastic Salvation in her Book of Hours at the Cloisters', *Art History* 17, no. 4 (1994): 586.

Paris, acted as the setting for many important diplomatic meetings.[114] She also participated in courtly life. In 1366, she held Charles V’s eldest daughter Joan—and perhaps also the Dauphin Charles in 1368—over the baptismal font.

Joan of Évreux resided sometimes in Paris and sometimes on her estates—particularly in the castle she inherited from her mother in Brie-Comte-Robert, which she had redesigned as a comfortable home. As dowager, she had substantial financial resources that allowed her to maintain a *hôtel* worthy of her rank (with 70 servants continuing to serve her in 1371) and to invest in pious, artistic and literary works.[115] Numerous pieces still attest to the quality of those she commissioned. The reliquary of the Virgin and Child, which she gave to the Abbey of Saint-Denis in 1339 and which is now held at the Louvre, is an exceptionally fine example, representing a real masterpiece of Gothic art.[116]

The queen’s status underwent many changes during the Late Middle Ages. She notably became an official mediator in political treaties between the king and his subjects (1297). At the same time, Philip IV chose to introduce the interment of the reginal body within the necropolis of Saint-Denis. Similarly, he promulgated one of the first regency laws granting all power to the mother of the children of France during the royal minority.

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[114] Allirot, ‘L’entourage et l’Hôtel de Jeanne d’Évreux’, 169–81.

[115] Chapters 8 and 9.

[116] Plagnieux, *L’art du Moyen Âge*, 370.

Chapter 5: The 'Government of Women': Delegating Power and Regency

The painted portraits of Catherine de' Medici depict the extraordinary power available to her as queen. Indeed, she was so puissant that she has even supplanted most male sovereigns in the French nation's memory.[1] François Clouet's painting, dated around 1580, provides an eloquent example of this. In this full-length portrait, Catherine de' Medici wears a gown of silver damask net with large lynx-trimmed cuffs and embroidered with pearls and diamonds set in gold, a dress of unequaled wealth that was worthy of the exceptional power she wielded—notably as regent (first between 1560 and 1563, and later on in 1574).[2]

While women were indeed excluded from succeeding to the throne in 1316, their power to govern during regencies was nonetheless acknowledged. While the kingdom of France was not supposed to 'fall to the girls', since the king's dignity did not (according to theorists) suit a female body, the queen could wield royal power for a limited amount of time in the sovereign's absence. His absence could be either fortuitous (due to death or madness) or voluntary (for a crusade or any other military expedition).

The female right to regency, which seemed 'natural' during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries since the governance of queen mothers

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[1] Fanny Cosandey, *La reine de France. Symbole et pouvoir* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000), 33.

[2] Florence, Galleria Palatina.

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M. Gaude-Ferragu, *Queenship in Medieval France, 1300–1500*,
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appeared to have stretched back to 'ancient times',[3] was in reality first an occasional practice (for example, under Blanche of Castile) before becoming the subject of a gradual legal construction (letters and edicts from 1294, 1374 and 1407) that, while indeed favoring the female sovereign's place, did not legalize it beyond the envisaged minority of the heir to the throne. Even during the early modern era, no law ever definitively ratified the queen's right to regency. In fact, far from advancing in the same direction as History (the queen mother's governance), the genesis of the regency is complex. Whether male or female, the choice of the candidate always depended on the king's will and the strength of the parties in attendance. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, his close relatives by blood or alliance were nonetheless favored, notably his wife, who as queen already had the dignity of power and as mother bore (according to the theorists) a 'natural love' for her children that led her to protect them.

Regency 'Orders': Female Power?

In the Late Middle Ages, the term 'regency' had long been anachronistic. Suger, the Abbot of Saint-Denis, and Blanche of Castile were indeed regents in reality, governing the kingdom in the king's absence or minority, but they never officially bore the title.[4] The title of 'regent of the kingdom was invented in 1316 for Louis X's brother, Philippe (the furure Philippe V). He became king few months later. 'Regency' as a term and a legal category only appeared for the first time in 1380, in the prologue to the chancery's register, and designated a more official role.[5]

The regent was in charge of governing the kingdom during the king's minority or absence. Some historians have preferred to reserve this title only for cases of royal minority, employing the term 'lieutenancy of power' when the king was voluntarily absent. To do so, they have based their arguments on the official acts undertaken under these jurisdictions, which distinguished between these two types of cases. Generally speaking, in the case of voluntary absence, the acts were entitled in the names of the lieutenants, who acted in their own names within the framework of their delegation, whereas, in the case of minority, the regents governed in the name of a king who was fictitiously capable.[6] Thus, the acts undertaken by Blanche of Castile were produced in the king's name, without any particular seal being employed. However, her name could be associated with that of the king using the phrase 'dominum regem Francie et matrem ejus, Dei gracia Francie reginam'.[7]

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[3] During the early modern period, there were numerous regents, including Louise of Savoy (the king's mother but not herself queen), Catherine de' Medici and Anne of Austria.

[4] Elie Berger, 'Le titre de régent dans les actes de la Chancellerie royale', *BEC* 61 (1900): 414.

[5] Yann Potin, 'Le coup d'État "révélé"? Régence et trésors du roi (septembre-novembre 1380)', in *Coups d'État à la fin du Moyen Âge ?* Actes du colloque de Madrid, 20–22 novembre 2002 (Madrid, 2005), 196; François Olivier-Martin, *Les régences et la majorité des rois sous les Capétiens directs et les premiers Valois 1060-1375* (Paris: Recueil Sirey, 1931); André Poulet, 'La régence et la majorité des rois au Moyen Âge. Histoire de la continuité monarchique et étatique sous les Capétiens et les Valois directs' (PhD diss., University of Strasbourg, 1989); and Poulet, 'Capetian Women and the Regency: The Genesis of a Vocation', in *Medieval Queenship*, ed. J.-C. Parsons (New York: St Martin's Press, 1993), 93–116.

This chapter will examine both actual (Joan of Burgundy and Isabeau of Bavaria) and theoretical lieutenancies and regencies. Out of fear of the objections linked to a possible minority, certain sovereigns organized future regencies that sometimes did not take place. French historians have tended to smooth out the chronology of reigns and successions. The inheritance of the crown and the stability of the succession seem to have been taken for granted, as if there was no possibility of usurpation or objection.[8] Yet the reality was far more complex. Between 1316 and 1328, the approval of an assembly of barons was needed to ensure the power of new kings. Similarly, between 1356 and 1360, the Dauphin Charles's regency while his father John II was held prisoner in London met with fierce opposition. That explains why sovereigns attempted to legislate in order to guarantee political continuity in the presence of a king who was a minor.

Female regency was far from common during the Middle Ages. There are indeed a few good examples of regencies held by women. In France, Brunehaut, the widow of King Sigebert I of Austrasia (561–575), acted as regent for her son. Gregory of Tours depicted her acting alone, accomplishing political acts, summoning abbots, imposing her supporters in episcopal seats, ordering the army and sending ambassadors to see foreign sovereigns.[9] In the Germanic world at the turn of the year 1000, Empresses Theophano and Adelaide of Burgundy were wielding power brilliantly in the name of Otto III (son of the former and grandson of the latter).

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[6] Olivier-Martin, *Les régences*, 35.

[7] Ursula Vones-Liebenstein, 'Une femme gardienne du royaume ? Régentes en temps de guerre (France, Castille, XIII^e^ siècle)', in *Guerre et gens au Moyen Âge*, eds. Philippe Contamine and Olivier Guyotjeannin (Paris: CTHS, 1996), 11.

[8] Potin, 'Le coup d'État', 183.

However, there was no rule when it came to kings granting regency to their close advisors or relatives according to circumstances and their affinities. When Louis VII left on the second crusade, Suger, the Abbot of Saint-Denis, became general lieutenant of the kingdom between 1147 and 1149. In 1190, Philip Augustus, who left on the third crusade, granted his mother Adela of Champagne power along with his uncle William of the White Hands, Archbishop of Reims. However, Adela and William's power was strictly limited. They were not allowed to handle the finances, which were entrusted to six burghers of Paris who guarded the royal seal that had been engraved for the circumstances.[10]

During the thirteenth century, female regency seems obvious to us, since Blanche of Castile's reign during Louis IX's difficult minority had made such an important impact.[11] Upon returning from his expedition against the Count of Toulouse, her husband Louis VIII fell ill with dysentery. He stopped in Montpensier, where he died on 8 November 1226, without having made any plans for how the kingdom should be governed in his absence or in the event of his death.[12] Blanche of Castile, mother of the Child King Louis, was entrusted with his tutelage, a situation that was subsequently legalized in an act given to the Treasury of Charters. Written by three prelates, the Archbishop of Sens and the Bishops of Chartres and Beauvais, it informed the recipients that, on his deathbed, Louis VIII had made it known that he had decided to place his son and successor, the kingdom and its children under the 'tenure and tutelage' of Queen Blanche until Louis reached the legal age. According to some historians, the act represents the written expression of desires that were really expressed by Louis VIII. For others, it was completely forged and destined to give an already existing situation the weight of a decision taken by a dying king.[13]

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[9] Emmanuelle Santinelli-Foltz, 'Brunehilde, Bathilde, Hildegarde, Richilde, Gerberge étaient-elles considérées comme des femmes de pouvoir? La perception masculine du pouvoir royal féminin et son évolution du VI^{e} au X^{e} siècle', in *Femmes de pouvoir et pouvoir des femmes dans l'Occident médiéval et moderne*, eds. Armel Nayt- Dubois and Emmanuelle Santinelli-Foltz (Valenciennes: Presses universitaires de Valenciennes, 2009), 61–65.

[10] Olivier-Martin, *Les régences*, 37.

[11] Gérard Sivery, *Blanche de Castille* (Paris: Fayard, 1990).

[12] Jacques Le Goff, *Saint Louis* (Paris, Gallimard, 1996).

Having thus received power from either her husband or his advisors, Blanche wielded it fully and kept it even beyond the king's majority (Capetian kings usually being acknowledged as having reached the age of majority at 14 years old). Indeed, the queen's strict tutelage linked to Louis IX's minority was succeeded by a sort of cogovernance, which lasted until at least 1234. As a sign of the king's confidence in his mother, he granted her the governance of the kingdom when he left on a crusade in 1248. During her two lieutenancies, the queen enjoyed the 'fullness of her power', wielding at once royal, diplomatic, military, financial and judicial powers.[14] She notably fought the barons who had revolted under the leadership of Peter Mauclerc, Duke of Brittany (in 1227), and managed to remove Thibaud of Champagne from the coalition, although the revolt lasted until 1231. She also negotiated treaties, such as the Treaty of Paris in 1229, and took landmark measures, including the orders surrounding the repression of heresy and the re-establishment of peace in the Languedoc region as well as that concerning the Jews and usury (1230).

The quality of female governance and the exemplary virtues that hagiographers recognized in the holy king's mother partly explain the favor enjoyed by queens in regency 'orders' from the end of the thirteenth to the fourteenth century. But other factors also came into play, ones that referred to the vocabulary of affection. In 1294, Philip IV the Fair entrusted his wife Joan of Navarre with power (governance of the kingdom and tutelage of the child king) in case of his heir's minority. He justified his decision by beautifully praising the queen, whom he lauded for her loyalty, fidelity and love for the kingdom and its subjects. Above all, he referred to the natural and sincere 'affection' that all mothers bear their children and which guarantees their fidelity toward her.[15] Roman-Byzantine legislation (the Theodosian and Justinian Codes) had insisted upon the same notion of 'piety' in order to justify a mother's eventual tutelage—and the importance of Roman law during the reign of Philip the Fair is well known.[16] It should be recalled that Joan was also an heiress queen, having gained political experience when managing her land alongside her husband.[17] As a wise and pious female sovereign, her virtues guaranteed that she would govern well.

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[13] Ibid., 85–88.

[14] Olivier-Martin, *Les régences*, 86.

[15] Paris, AN, J 401, n° 4–5; Olivier-Martin, *Les régences*, 104; and Poulet, 'Capetian Women and the Regency', 93–116.

[16] Maria Teresa Guerra Medici, *Donne di governo nell'Europa moderna* (Rome: Viella), 39; Laura Gaffuri, 'Lo statum reginale tra distinzione ed eccezione: il caso sabaudo (XV secolo)',

Maternal love was again used as an argument by sovereigns during the fourteenth century. When Charles V in turn gave a series of orders in anticipation of eventual problems related to succession in 1374, he used these natural ties to justify the place he granted his wife Joan of Bourbon, tutor of the children of France: 'The mother has a greater and more tender love for her children, and with a soft and caring heart takes care of and nourishes them more lovingly than any other person, no matter how closely related, and for this reason, she is to be preferred above all others.'[18]

Joan of Navarre never ended up governing the kingdom, dying nine years before her husband in 1305. The regencies that followed were exclusively male, with Louis X's brother Philip in 1316 and Charles IV's first cousin Philip of Valois in 1328 both proclaimed regents by an assembly of barons. A beautiful illumination by Jean Fouquet illustrating the *Grandes Chroniques de France* depicts Queen Joan of Évreux's tacit agreement to the latter arrangement, designating Philip of Valois as regent.[19] In it, she appears as a 'political intermediary', pregnant with the presumed heir (in reality, she would have a daughter) but symbolically handing over the governance of the kingdom to the future Philip VI with a wave of the hand. There was another male regency in 1356, when John II was taken prisoner during the Battle of Poitiers. His son Charles replaced him, first as lieutenant and then as regent two years later.

Having become king in 1364 and dreading the difficulties that he had himself encountered, Charles V promulgated a series of orders between August and October 1374 that regulated the majority age for kings (fixed at the end of 13 full years)[20] and organized the regency in the event of the sovereign's premature death. Three letters patent were promulgated one after the other in October. The tutelage of the royal children was entrusted

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in *Forme e segni della distinzione sociale / Marquer la prééminence sociale* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de la Sorbonne, 2015).

[17] Elisabeth Lalou, 'Le gouvernement de la reine Jeanne', Cahiers Haut-Marnais 67 (1986): 16–30.

[18] Tracy Adams, *The Life and Afterlife of Isabeau of Bavaria* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010).

[19] Paris, BnF, Fr. 5054, fol. 342 v°; François Avril, *Fouquet, peintre et enlumineur du XVᵉ siècle*, 242.

[20] Paris, AN, J 401 n° 6 in Brunel, *Images du pouvoir royal*, 200; Françoise Autrand, 'La succession à la couronne de France et les ordonnances de 1374', in *Représentation, pouvoir et royauté*, ed. Joël Blanchard (Paris: Picard, 1995), 25–32.

to Queen Joan of Bourbon, assisted by the king's brother Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, and the female sovereign's brother Louis, Duke of Bourbon.[21] The governance of the kingdom—the regency itself—was in the first instance equally shared between the queen and the two dukes.[22] But Charles V shifted the focus two days later. In order to prevent all forms of usurpation, he chose for the first time to disassociate the tutelage of the future king and the governance of the kingdom, which he attributed to his older brother Louis, Duke of Anjou.[23]

In a January 1393 order, Charles VI borrowed the same legal configuration, disassociating tutelage and regency, with the former being entrusted to Queen Isabeau of Bavaria (assisted by the princes of the blood: the Dukes of Berry, Burgundy, Bourbon and Bavaria) and the latter to his brother Louis of Orleans. The order regulated the modes of an eventual regency in case of minority, six months after the king's first bout of madness.[24]

The regency due to minority never happened. Between breakdowns, Charles VI continued to govern. However, the frequency of his bouts of madness created a sort of void in power, leading to the emergence of ambitions and rivalries between the princes of the blood. Depending on the strength of the parties in attendance, new orders were promulgated favoring either the Dukes of Burgundy (Philip the Bold, followed by his son John the Fearless in 1404) or Louis of Orleans in the rival camp. In April 1403, Philip the Bold—taking advantage of one of Charles VI's bouts of insanity and Louis's absence—had an order elaborated in the Council under Charles VI's name anticipating that, in the event of the king's death, his eldest son would succeed him with full and complete authority, even if he was a minor.[25] Considering, however, that a young child could not reign over the kingdom, its governance was entrusted to a regency council presided over by Isabeau of Bavaria, assisted by the princes of the blood and the royal advisors.[26] The same configuration was employed in a second order, not in the event of the king's death but in that of his 'absence'. The diplomatic role the queen had played in January 1402, when she had placed herself above the parties in order to re-establish peace, had considerably influenced this new configuration. The queen did not hold the legal reins of power for long. As early as 11 May 1403, Louis of Orleans, who had returned to the government, had the previous order annulled.

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[21] Paris, AN, J 402 n° 7 in Brunel, *Images du pouvoir royal*, 212.

[22] Paris, AN, J 402, n° 8; Poulet, *La régence et la majorité des rois*, 130–31.

[23] Isambert, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises* (Paris: Belin-Leprieur), 5:424–30.

[24] Paris, AN, J 402, n° 10 in Brunel, *Images du pouvoir royal*, 216.

[25] Krynen, *L'Empire du roi*, 150; Guenée*, Un meurtre, une société*, 165; and Bertrand Schnerb, *Les Armagnacs et les Bourguignons. La maudite guerre* (Paris: Perrin, 1988), 55.

[26] Paris, AN, J 355, n° 1 in Gibbons, 'Les conciliatrices', 27.

The rivalry between the princes increased further when the elderly Duke of Burgundy died in April 1404. His son John the Fearless would not accept any compromises. The inevitable clash took place and ended with the assassination of Louis of Orleans on 23 November 1407. While the duke was leaving the queen's *hôtel*, he was assailed by a dozen masked men armed with swords and axes, crying, 'Death! Death!' The duke tried to protect himself but was violently assassinated by men who, as it was later learned, had been sent by John the Fearless. His murder challenged the government's stability, especially since Louis was the designated regent in the event of the king's demise.

It was again necessary to establish the rules of succession to the throne. The royal order of 26 December 1407 (proclaimed during a solemn session: a *lit de justice* held at the Parlement of Paris) was fundamental when it came to the legal construction of the regency. Like that of 1374, it was meant to be perpetual and irrevocable. Charles VI established that his successor could be crowned even if he was a minor.[27] Just as they had been in 1403, the tutelage of the child king and the governance of the kingdom merged and were entrusted to a collegial regency. The council brought together the Queen Mother Isabeau of Bavaria, the princes of the blood and the king's main advisors. Establishing a co-regency had the merit of preventing a personal takeover of power.[28] In reality, nothing had been regulated, and the kingdom descended into civil war.

While the queen's place as tutor of the children of France and/or guardian of the kingdom had thus been accepted, it had not been established by any fundamental law. In August 1483, Louis XI, who was ill, entrusted the regency not to his wife Charlotte of Savoy, but to her son-in-law Peter of Beaujeu and, through him, to her daughter Anne. The king deemed the queen too discreet and lacking in political ambition, being fully focused on her devotional books.[29] Above all, her son-in-law had already gained good political experience, and her daughter was gifted with a great capacity for authority and a strong sense of politics.[30]

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[27] Paris, AN, J 402, n° 14 in Brunel, *Images du pouvoir royal*, 206.

[28] Cosandey, *La reine de France*, 39.

[29] Anne-Marie Legaré, 'Charlotte de Savoie's Library and Illuminators', *Journal of the Early Book Society for the Study of Manuscripts and Printing History* IV (2001): 41; François

However, at the end of the fifteenth century, the queen’s exclusion—from the tutelage at least—was not taken for granted. Supported by Louis II of Orleans and Francis of Dunois, Charlotte of Savoy made her rights to the guardianship of her son known. A compromise was found on 12 September 1483, when a council bringing together a variety of political forces of the time was composed. The queen’s party, which was linked to the princes of the blood, was in the majority.[31] But Charlotte’s illness and subsequent death on 1 December put an end to this attempt at governance. Peter and Anne of Beaujeu retained the regency.

The queen’s promotion as tutor and regent was asserted once more during the early sixteenth century. In May 1505, Louis XII, who was gravely ill, wrote a testament in which he organized a potential regency. If he were to die, he wished for Queen Anne of Brittany to ‘lead the important and primary events and secret affairs of the kingdom’ assisted by different figures, including the Countess of Angoulême, Louise of Savoy (the mother of Francis of Valois, who was first in the line of succession); the Cardinal of Amboise, legate of France; the Count of Nevers, Louis of La Trémoïlle; and Florimont Robertet.[32]

Eventually, the queen’s political promotion took place in the autumn of the Middle Ages, when she was entrusted with the tutelage of the child king and/or the governance of the kingdom. However, no law was to ratify this increased status in any lasting way, and it would remain subject to power struggles between parties and circumstance. The princes of the blood, who were the King of France’s uncles and brothers, were equally capable of receiving the regency, either alone (the 1374 regency law in favor of Louis of Anjou and the 1393 order in favor of Louis of Orleans) or as part of a collegium with the queen (the 1407 order).

This assertion of the mother as regent was not specific to the kingdom of France. The duchy of Savoy provides some fine examples of female gov-

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Avril, ‘Un portrait inédit de la reine Charlotte de Savoie,’ in *Mélanges à Thérèse Kleindienst* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale, 1985) 1:195–96.

[30] Jean-François Lassalmonie, ‘Anne de France, dame de Beaujeu : un modèle féminin d’exercice du pouvoir dans la France de la fin du Moyen Âge’, in *Femmes de pouvoir, femmes politiques,* eds. Éric Bousmar et al., 129–39.

[31] Didier Le Fur, *Charles VIII* (Paris: Perrin, 2006).

[32] ‘Conduyse les grands et principaux faits et secrètes affaires du royaume.’ Cosandey, *La reine de France*, 300.

ernance.[33] In fact, since the reign of Amedeo IV (d. 1383), women were excluded from succession there,[34] although a number of princesses were successful as regents, such as Bonne of Bourbon during the fourteenth century and Louis XI's sister Yolanda of France during the fifteenth century. In the case of the latter, the public transmission of the regency was centered around an exceptional ceremony bringing together the Assembly of Savoy in Verceil on 13 April 1472, since Amedeo IX had died intestate and there were no orders or testamentary instructions. The duchess accepted her new status out of 'love for her son', which harked back to the topos of maternal piety. Within a difficult context (in which the deceased duke's brother Philip of Bresse could lay equal claim to governing the duchy), the ceremony lent her additional legitimacy.

Female Regency in Action: Seats of Power and Governance of the Kingdom

During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, two queens actually played the role of 'king's lieutenant': Joan of Burgundy during the king's temporary absence 'for act of war' and Isabeau of Bavaria during her husband's intermittent bouts of madness.

A Female 'Lieutenant of the Kingdom': The Example of Joan of Burgundy

In 1338, Joan of Burgundy received the lieutenancy of the kingdom, since Philip VI, who was engaged in the Hundred Years War, was on every front at the time.[35] He granted her all of the accompanying powers, that of royal grace as well as the financing of the war, declaring her king 'in our place … as we could do in our presence'.[36] He justified his decision by the confidence he placed in his wife, who was concerned about the king's honor and the kingdom's well-being. The queen was indeed an exceptional figure. As the first female sovereign of the Valois dynasty, she was also connected to the direct Capetian line, being Saint Louis's granddaughter through her mother Agnes of France. She had already played an informal role in mediating before the king, as attested to by her particularly rich correspondence with the papacy[37] and her influence when it came to nominating certain officers who were natives of Burgundy. As an educated princess, she was far from being a political novice, owning over 20 manuscripts of which a large number were political or historical in nature (an exceptional share of which had only been found among Mahaut of Artois's inventory in 1329).[38] It should be recalled that she was the one who commissioned Jean de Vignay's translation of the political treatise evoking the king and the queen's game on the chessboard: Jacobus de Cessolis's *Moralized Game of Chess*.[39]

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[33] Gaffuri, 'Lo statum reginale tra distinzione ed eccezione'.

[34] Laurent Ripart, '*Non est consuetum in comitatu sabaudie quod filia succedit patri in comitatu et possessione comitatus.* Genèse de la coutume savoyarde de l'exclusion des filles', in *Pierre II de Savoie. Le petit Charlemagne*, eds. Bernard Andenmatten, Agostino Paravicini-Bagliani and Eva Pibiri (Lausanne: Université de Lausanne), 302.

[35] Anne-Hélène Allirot, *Filles de roy de France. Princesses royales, mémoire de saint Louis et conscience dynastique (de 1270 à la fin du XIV^{e} siècle)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 414–17.

[36] 'En lieu de nous … comme nous pourrions faire en nostre presence.' Ibid., 417.

The queen thus served as the king's lieutenant for two years in 1338 and 1339. While Philip VI was gathering his troops near Amiens, she ordered her accounting people to ensure the payment of loans that she had just secured from members of her family, the king's officers and the clerks of Paris, Arras and Ferrières by a mandement dated 3 September 30, 1338. The total amount represented approximately 10,000 deniers. She again intervened in 1339, while Philip VI was away on a military campaign. Edward III was at the gates of Laon and was having the surrounding villages burned down. Joan spoke to the Parisians, who were frightened of a possible siege, and announced that the King of England was not targeting the capital, but the bailiwick of Chaumont. At the same time, she warned the bailiwick's officers of the possible threat in a letter dated 17 October.

As a result of the importance the queen had gained by governing the kingdom, she had an exceptional seal, which was similar to the king's seals of majesty in its round (and not oblong) shape, length (83 mm) and the particularly rich decoration.[40] On it, Joan is depicted standing, her head encircled by a crown with three fleurons. She holds two scepters: one covered in fleurs-de-lis, which was traditional on seals, and the other one shorter and completed with a floral motif (a rose-covered rod).

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[37] Chapter 4.

[38] Allirot, *Filles de roy de France*, 464.

[39] Christine Knowles, 'Jean de Vignay, un traducteur du XIV^{e} siècle', *Romania* 54 (1954): 360.

[40] *Corpus des sceaux. Les sceaux des reines et des enfants de France*ed. Marie-Adélaïde Nielen (Paris: Service interministériel des Archives de France, 2011).

These lieutenancies of power entrusted to women were not specific to the Queen of France. Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy (1319–1467), who governed a bipolar principality, effectively raised the delegation of power to the level of a political system, especially where his wife Isabella of Portugal was concerned. Assisted by a council, she embodied power in the Netherlands on two occasions for a number of months during the 1440s. These delegations did not entail any restrictions, and the duchess—whose diplomatic and financial activity greatly extended past her periods of governance—developed an extended political policy in a number of spheres, at once administrative, legal, monetary and military.[41]

Isabeau of Bavaria's 'Regency'

Like that of Joan of Burgundy, Isabeau of Bavaria's seal was exceptional and confirmed the special political place she occupied. Its round shape and its length (Fig. 5.1, 89 mm.) made it similar to the king's seal of majesty. The queen is depicted standing, wearing a crown and holding a scepter covered in fleurs-de-lis. Behind her, two winged and haloed angels unfurl a panel of fabric bearing her coat of arms (French and Bavarian parties with a lozenge pattern).[42] This seal, of which no other examples prior to 1409 are known, was chosen for political reasons, since the queen could be led to preside over the Royal Council and intervene in the governance of the kingdom.

Indeed, due to her husband's intermittent 'absences', Isabeau of Bavaria wielded an unusual amount of power for a queen. Nonetheless, one cannot speak of a true regency in that the king once more took hold of the reins of power as soon as he was well again. Since he never completely entrusted her with the lieutenancy of the kingdom, it is therefore better to speak of a bicephalous form of power, held by Charles VI when he was in remission and by his wife during his bouts of madness (at certain points only).[43] Isabeau never managed to truly impose herself on the political stage above the all-powerful princes, whether it be the Duke of Orleans or the Dukes of Burgundy. Neither was she successful in re-establishing peace between the parties, so strong were the rivalries between them.

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[41] Monique Sommé, *Isabelle de Portugal, duchesse de Bourgogne. Une femme au pouvoir au XV^{e} siècle*, (Lille: Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 1998).

[42] Nielen, *Corpus des sceaux*, 107.

[43] Bernard Guenée, *Un meurtre, une société. L'assassinat du duc d'Orléans 23 novembre 1407* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992).

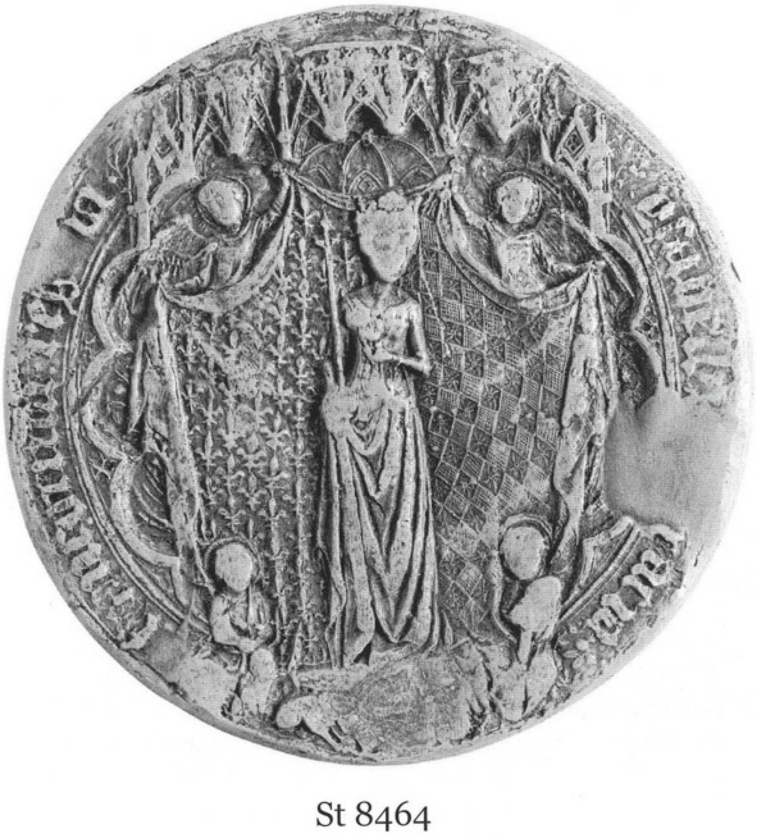

Fig. 5.1 Seal of Isabeau of Bavaria, round seal, 89 mm.

Isabeau’s interventions were initially diplomatic, in accordance with what was acknowledged as the queen’s traditional role. On a number of occasions, she attempted to arbitrate the conflict between Louis of Orleans and the Dukes of Burgundy, intervening at the height of the crisis in 1402 (a role with which the king had entrusted her in an order dated 16 March) and in 1405.[44] This ‘pacifying’ role in fact led her to govern in actuality, presiding over the Royal Council on a number of occasions. In July 1402, an ‘ordonnance’ accompanied her official role as mediator during the king’s absences from the ‘management of finances and other difficulties of the realm’.[45] She did not perform her role as arbiter alone, but assisted by the princes of the blood, mainly the Dukes of Berry and Bourbon. Initially allied to Philip the Bold, who had engineered her marriage to Charles VI, she later became close to her brother-in-law after Philip’s death in 1404, wanting very much to defy the new Duke of Burgundy, John the Fearless.

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[44] Chapter 4.

The rivalry between the princes ended in the assassination of the Duke of Orleans on 23 November 1407. Shortly after, Charles VI gave a fundamental order (26 December) stipulating that, if he died, his eldest son would become king, even if he was a minor, and that the kingdom’s affairs would be handled by a collegial council composed of the queen, the princes of the blood and the royal advisors. This arrangement was also valid if Charles VI was ‘excused for illness’.[46] Thus, Isabeau of Bavaria obtained a real delegation of power from the king. Although she did not act alone, her participation in the kingdom’s affairs was acknowledged.

The dream of a collegial government quickly disappeared nonetheless. On 28 February 1408, John the Fearless entered Paris ‘dressed for war’. During a few weeks, the queen, John the Fearless and the princes of the blood shared the power as best they could. In particular, they agreed on the nomination of a few officers. The entente was to be a temporary one. During a solemn session at the Hôtel Saint-Pol on 8 March, John the Fearless had the theologian Jean Petit justify his crime. Three days later, Isabeau decided to leave Paris with the royal children. John the Fearless was soon master of the capital and the kingdom’s affairs. In July, however, the Duke of Burgundy left to rescue his brother-in-law John of Bavaria, Bishop of Liège, besieged by his subjects who had revolted in Maastricht. The queen quickly took advantage of the situation to assume control. She first had the letters absolving John the Fearless of the accusation of assassination annulled. On 1 September, she had a royal order proclaimed, which was meant to ensure the peace and tranquility of Paris by prohibiting defamatory words, libel and assault. Four days later, the king’s lawyer Jean Jouvenal, in the presence of all of the kingdom’s political authorities (princes, prelates, advisors, the provost of merchants and the burghers of Paris) announced ‘the power granted and committed by the king to the queen and to the Monseigneur of Guyenne over the governance of the kingdom, the king being prevented or absent'.[47] The lieutenancy now officially belonged to Isabeau and her eldest son Louis of Guyenne, the Dauphin. But on 23 September, John the Fearless scored a dazzling victory against the inhabitants of Liège at Othée. It was clear that he would again make himself master of Paris. During the first days of November, the queen and her children left the capital. At that time, the tension between the enemy princes John the Fearless and Charles of Orleans, son of the assassinated duke, had reached its peak.

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[45] Adams, *The Life and Afterlife*, 95.

[46] Guenée, *Un meurtre, une société*, 181.

The negotiations led to a meeting set in Chartres and marked by a reconciliation ceremony attended by all the actors on 9 March. Following a polished ritual, Isabeau of Bavaria played the role that had been attributed to her exceedingly well. In the cathedral, the king was seated in majesty, surrounded by the princes. John the Fearless kneeled before him, asking his forgiveness for the crime against his brother. Isabeau of Bavaria, the Dauphin Louis, the Kings of Sicily and Navarre and the Duke of Berry each kneeled in turn before Charles VI, saying: 'Sire! We entreat you to please accept your cousin from Burgundy's plea and request.'[48] Charles VI accepted the request, along with the children of Orleans, who forgave their father's murderer. In reality, without John the Fearless's real repentance and without amends having been made, the Peace of Chartres had not settled anything at all.

The queen, who had played a real political role in 1408-1409, subsequently withdrew from the kingdom's affairs. In fact, she hardly had a choice. The collegial regency was a failure. John the Fearless was master of the kingdom, as ratified in an order dated 27 December 1409, which granted him 'the guardianship, governance and continual company' of the Dauphin Louis of Guyenne, his son-in-law (through his marriage to the duke's daughter Margaret of Burgundy in 1404).[49] The dauphin, having reached the age of majority in January 1410, 'took the place' of the king in his absence and could preside over councils. But the power really belonged to John the Fearless.

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[47] 'La puissance octroiée et commise par le roy à la royne et audit monseigneur de Guyenne sur le gouvernement du royaume, le roy empeschié ou absent.' Ibid., 203.

[48] 'Sire ! nous vous prions qu'il vous plaise à passer la priere et requeste de vostre cousin de Bourgongne.' Ibid., 203.

[49] Ibid.

It would not be useful here to present a detailed account of all the events that took place during the civil war between the Burgundians and the Armagnacs. Instead, it should simply be noted that Isabeau, who had long been hostile toward John the Fearless, grew closer to him as early as the end of 1409. Following the Cabochian crisis of 1413, she then rallied to the side of the Armagnacs, who were masters of the capital at the time.

Isabeau's political role only became important again in 1417. In April, under the pretext that her ladies-in-waiting had behaved badly, the Royal Council, which was presided over by Bernard of Armagnac, decided to exile her to Tours (above all as a means of seizing her treasury). Rejected by her former allies, she turned to John the Fearless, who himself needed her support to legally establish his power. At the time, John the Fearless was close to reconquering Paris. But the Dauphin Charles (the future Charles VII), who was 14 years old and to whom the king had entrusted the general lieutenancy of the kingdom in his absence (in an order dated 14 June 1417), had legitimacy on his side.

John the Fearless liberated Isabeau of Bavaria, who immediately gave him the legal foundation he lacked. On 11 November, she reminded people that the letters patent, through which the king had entrusted her with the governance of the kingdom on 26 April 1403, were irrevocable. She was now called 'Isabella, by the grace of God, Queen of France, having, for Monseigneur the King's occupation, the governance and administration of this kingdom'.[50] Along with John the Fearless, she created a government in Troyes that ran parallel to that in Paris and which was endowed with all the monarchical institutions, including a chancellor, a Chamber of Accounts and a Parlement in Amiens, which she soon endowed with its own seal so that the acts that proceeded from the institution and entitled in her name could be dispatched. This 'seal of causes, sovereignties and appellations of the king' was exceptional, since it was the Parlement's first seal.[51] Round-shaped and large in size (the remaining fragment is 71 mm long), it offered a superb representation of the queen in majesty, wearing a crown and holding in her gloved hand two ecus: one bearing the French coat of arms and the other bearing the French and Bavarian coat of arms.

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[50] 'Isabel, par la grace de Dieu, royne de France, ayans, pour occupation de monseigneur le roy, le gouvernement et administracion de ce royaulme.' Ibid.

[51] Nielen, *Corpus des sceaux*, 109; Brigitte Bedos-Rezak, 'Idéologie royale, ambitions princières et rivalités politiques d'après le témoignage des sceaux (France, 1380-1461)', in *La France anglaise au Moyen Âge* (Paris: CTHS), 1:488–89.

The Armagnac government quickly reacted with an order in the king's name dated 6 November 1417, which quickly sought to annul any delegation of power that could have been given to the queen in the past and confirmed the general lieutenancy entrusted to the Dauphin Charles. On 11 November, letters were sent to all the principal towns in the kingdom ordering that the mandements of Isabeau and John the Fearless's government not be obeyed, even though their government held most of the power (an actual situation acknowledged by letters patent from the queen on 10 January 1418, which gave the duke full power to 'govern and regulate' the kingdom). On 29 May, the Burgundians entered Paris, massacring thousands of Armagnacs. On 14 July, the queen and John the Fearless solemnly returned to the capital. Two days later, the king confirmed everything the queen had decided and therefore implicitly all the powers conferred upon John the Fearless.

The final act played out in Troyes, where the famous treaty was signed. The inexpiable war that both sides waged against each other led to the murder of John the Fearless on the bridge at Montereau on 10 September 1419. What was supposed to be a summit meeting to seal the reconciliation between both parties was in fact an ambush for John the Fearless organized by the Dauphin Charles and his advisors. The outcome of the murder was dramatic. Even though the dauphin did not strike the fatal blow, he was present and complicit.

The new Duke of Burgundy, Philip the Good, decided to conclude an alliance with the English, who were now in control in France, which was divided into two irreconcilable camps. Negotiations began as early as October and ended in an alliance treaty signed in December.

Charles VI and Isabeau simultaneously wrote multiple letters affirming the dauphin's responsibility. As early as 17 January 1420, one of them, given in the king's name in Troyes, prohibited people from obeying the young prince's mandements, saying that the murderer and perjurer Charles had made himself 'unworthy of our succession and of all other honor and dignity' (*indigne de nostre succession et de toute aultre honneur et dignité*). In this document, Charles VI took up the clauses of the Anglo-Burgundian treaty and envisaged the possibility of an alliance with the English king Henry V, who could 'be our son by marriage treaty between him and our daughter' (*estre nostre filz par traicté de mariage de luy et de* *nostre dicte fille*)[52] in order to re-establish ‘firm peace’ and ‘general tranquility’ between the kingdoms of France and England.[53]

This was accomplished during the signing of the Treaty of Troyes (20 May 1420). Charles VI, who had been detached from reality for some time, and Isabeau of Bavaria, who had been allied to the Dukes of Burgundy, accepted the conditions defined by Henry V and Philip the Good. The treaty established a dual monarchy, with the king and his wife depriving the ‘so-called Dauphin of Viennois’ of his rights. Disinherited ‘for his enormous crimes’, he was excluded from the succession to the crown. Charles VI gave his daughter Catherine to Henry V, whom he acknowledged as his son. Upon his death, both kingdoms remained independent but were under the tutelage of the same monarch: Henry V or his successors.

The Treaty of Troyes marked the end of the queen’s political intervention. Afterward, she rarely left the Hôtel Saint-Pol, where she died in 1435. During her *grande entrée* in Paris in 1431, Henry VI nonetheless came to see her, publicly seeking his grandmother’s official blessing out of concern for legitimization.

Yet, far from being forgotten, Isabeau continued to feed early modern and modern historiography with the dark legend that surrounded her, one that has traversed the centuries despite recent attempts to restore her to favor.[54] Her historiographical journey, which is far from unique, is mixed up with that of other queens who wielded real political authority and have frequently been deemed ‘bad queens’.

The Historiographical Posterity of Women in Power: ‘Bad’ Queens

The power that political queens (regents and lieutenants) wielded and their influence on the kingdom’s affairs earned them much criticism from their adversaries in their lifetimes and even after their deaths—since they were discredited by historians, who had long been hostile toward women in power and spread the dark legends that surrounded them.[55]

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[52] Catherine of France.

[53] Guenée, *Un meurtre, une société*, 272; Schnerb, *Les Armagnacs et les Bourguignons*, 213.

[54] Adams, *The Life and Afterlife*.

[55] Colette Beaune, ‘La mauvaise reine des origines. Frédégonde aux XIV^{e} et XV^{e} siècles’, *MEFRIM* 113, no. 1 (2001): 29–44.

Rumors, pamphlets and slander were disseminated while they were still alive. These criticisms, which were spread by their detractors, were all the more violent when a woman headed the kingdom. Blanche of Castile, who was both foreign and the regent, had to suffer such attacks at the beginning of her reign. During the barons' revolt in 1228, pamphlets circulated accusing her of emptying the royalty's coffers to benefit her Castilian parents and being the mistress of the pontifical legate Romano Frangipani.[56] These rumors were not taken up by contemporary chroniclers, who instead strived to show how exemplary she was as a mother who had given birth to the great saint of the Capetian dynasty.

For other sovereigns, historiography fed the criticism and even created new polemics. Joan of Burgundy thus became 'the evil, lame queen … who was like a king and had destroyed those who went against her pleasure'.[57] She was accused of diverse abuses, including usurping the royal seal (which allowed her to act as she wanted), treason and poisoning. The accusation of treason was part of the well-known episode involving the burghers of Calais. King Edward III had besieged Calais in order to make it his base for intervening in the northern part of the kingdom. The siege was prolonged, and the population ended up capitulating. Philip VI sent an emergency army, but the queen apparently persuaded him to renounce battle. According to the chronicler of the *Quatre premiers Valois*, the sovereign 'by letters from the queen, was advised to return, which was not good' (although, in reality, no element contained in the king's letter dating back to this time indicates that the queen had advised her husband to come back).[58] According to the Norman chronicler Pierre Cochon (who was writing a century after the events took place), Joan of Burgundy had also planned to kill the Archbishop of Rouen Jean de Marigny by a poisoned bath.[59] The stratagem was allegedly discovered by the Duke of Normandy, who threw a dog in the bath instead of the archbishop. The animal was said to have died in front of onlookers.[60] Accusations of poisoning were recurrent among the criticisms formulated against women in power. Marie of Brabant and Mahaut of Artois stood thus accused, the former of poisoning her stepson and heir to the throne Louis (through rumors started by her political adversary Peter de La Brosse) and the latter of poisoning the king himself, Louis X, who died abruptly in 1316 (the trial was prolonged, and she was only solemnly cleared of these accusations by a judgment in Parlement on 9 October 1317).

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[56] Le Goff, *Saint Louis*, 104.

[57] 'La male royne boiteuse … qui estoit comme roy et faisoit destruire ceulx qui contre son plaisir aloient.' Allirot, *Filles de roy de France*, 428–9; Allirot, 'La *male royne* boiteuse : Jeanne de Bourgogne', in *Royautés imaginaires (XII^{e}-XVI^{e} siècles)*, eds. Anne-Hélène Allirot, Gilles Lecuppre and Lydwine Scordia (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), 123.

[58] Jean-Marie Moeglin, *Les bourgeois de Calais. Essai sur un mythe historique* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2002).

[59] 'Par les lettres de la roine, eut conseil de retourner, qui ne fut bon.' Franck Collart, *Le crime de poison* (Paris: PUF, 2003), 71.

[60] Ibid., 111–17.

Thus was the dark legend surrounding Joan of Burgundy born. The power she wielded was deemed excessive, provoking suspicion and false rumors.[61] For both the *Chronique des quatre premiers Valois* and Pierre Cochon, she became the 'evil, lame queen'. While her physical defect was indeed real, chroniclers used it to refer to the figure of the devil and the blackness of her soul.

Isabeau of Bavaria's historiographical posterity is just as frightening. As a greedy and, furthermore, foreign queen of bad moral character, she was said to have sold France to the English by signing the Treaty of Troyes. Her image was further besmirched by French republican historiography during the nineteenth century, which compared her to another equally disdained female sovereign: Marie-Antoinette.

For the past few years, historians have strived to restore Isabeau's reign to favor. Tracy Adams has recently shown that the dark legend surrounding her was completely fabricated, first by modern chroniclers who were close to the Burgundian circles that wanted to tarnish the image of the woman who was an ally of Louis of Orleans, and then by the supporters of her son Charles VII, whom she had disinherited. In doing so, she was considered by them to have betrayed the 'nation of France', which was in the process of being constructed and which Charles VII embodied before the English enemies.[62]

Indeed, her primary detractors were Burgundian supporters, such as the Monk of Saint-Denis (in the year 1405), whose words are worth quoting.

> Along with the clergy, the suffering nobility and lower classes reflected angrily, their hearts filled with bitterness, on the intolerable yoke imposed on the people under the title of war subsidies, because it did not permit them to remain in the beauty of peace and luxurious repose of the world. The inhabitants put the blame on the queen and the Duke of Orleans, who were governing inefficiently.[63]

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[61] Allirot, *Filles de roy de France*, 429.

[62] Adams, *The Life and Afterlife*, 114–24.

[63] *Chronique du religieux de Saint-Denis, contenant le règne de Charles VI, de 1380 à 1422*, ed. M. L. Bellaguet (Paris: CTHS, 1842), 2:267.

Present here are the main grievances against the queen and her brother-in-law Louis of Orleans, including bad governance, fiscal injustice, extreme greed and an excessive taste for luxury and finery. The anonymous author of the *Songe véritable* (written toward 1406) denigrated the queen based on the same arguments, criticizing her even more emphatically for outrageous spending and her thirst for acquiring material goods.[64] This pamphlet was destined to stain the memory of Isabeau but was not proof of her true unpopularity. One can only note that her spending did indeed increase during the first years of the fifteenth century, being devoted to the purchase of golden and silk sheets as well as the fabrication of sumptuous gowns and jewelry. Between 1401 and 1403, her spending on jewels reached the elevated sum of 37,000 livres tournois. The Princes of Burgundy spent 39,000 livres on equivalent purchases for this position in 1400.[65] Such purchases corresponded to the necessary ostentation at court and the climate of emulation that reigned there. In this way, Isabeau asserted her status and her power as *the* Queen of France, making her dignity visible.

In addition to greed and luxury, the female sovereign was also accused of depravity. Rumors circulated in Paris about her liaison with her brother-in-law Louis of Orleans. Once again, John the Fearless's agents were the generous purveyors of such gossip. The *Geste des Nobles François*, which indeed favored the Duke of Orleans, later said that the duke 'had spread … false lies about the queen and the Duke of Orleans his brother in taverns'.[66] This slander aimed to tarnish the image of the governmental couple by using a classic argument, since it was always easy to reduce the woman to the figure of the temptress or the seductress, one of Eve's descendants.

All of these attacks were the work of adverse propaganda. However, the sermon that the Augustinian monk Jacques Legrand gave before Isabeau of Bavaria and her court in 1405, which was particularly virulent when it came to the queen, cannot be accused of taking the same side. Indeed, the preacher was close to Louis of Orleans. 'Lady Venus,' he said, 'occupies the throne in your court: certainly drunkenness and debauchery follow her, turning night into day, with continual dissolute dancing.'[67] According to Adams, the established style of aulic sermons, which sought to reform the mores and morals at court, explains such words.[68] Nonetheless, beyond the propaganda, many judgments made on the queen were undoubtedly not in her favor.

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[64] Henri Moranvillé, ed., '*Le Songe véritable*. Pamphlet politique d'un parisien du XV^{e} siècle,' *Mémoires de la Société de l'Histoire de Paris* XVII (1890): 296.

[65] Gibbons, 'The Queen as "Social Mannequin" ', 389–94; Maurice Rey, *Les finances royales sous Charles VI : les causes du déficit 1388-1413 (*Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1965).

[66] 'Fist semer … par tavernes faulses mençonges de la royne et du duc d'Orléans son frere.' Guenée, *Un meurtre, une société*, 172.

[67] *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denys*, 2:269, in Adams, *The Life and Afterlife*, 135.

According to the official historiography, Isabeau was ultimately the 'great traitress' to the nation of France, since she accepted the disinheritance of her own son to benefit the King of England. In reality, the Treaty of Troyes was first and foremost a bargaining between the English and the Burgundians. Isabeau had seen John the Fearless, her protector at the time, perish by order of the dauphin. In order to avoid anachronisms, it is necessary to place oneself in the middle of bloody struggle in which both sides—both factions—were engaged, not a Manichaean opposition between the 'good dauphin' who defended the country and the Burgundian traitors who (along with the queen) sold the kingdom to the English, which was a historiographical vision created after the fact.[69]

Thus, while women were excluded from the succession to the crown of France, they could nonetheless represent political authority during periods of minority and royal absence. The queen's 'natural love' for her children guaranteed her fidelity toward them, without risking usurpation (in the image of Blanche of Castile's regency). Justified under Salic Law, the exheredation of women reinforced the idea of the maternal abnegation of the queen, who could be completely trusted since she was legally incapable of any kind of usurpation.

This maternal image was highlighted by the first great regent of the sixteenth century, Louise of Savoy, who played a central political role during the Italian campaigns led by her son Francis I (in 1515 and between 1525 and 1526) not as dowager queen (being 'only' Duchess of Angoulême), but as the king's mother. By the authority made available to her, the regent nearly obtained royal status. Her funeral, which was celebrated in 1531, was worthy of the greatest female sovereigns, modeled in part after those of Anne of Brittany and Claude of France (with a canopy and wax effigy).[70] Indeed, under the Valois, the ceremonialization of the monarchy would not only put the king's body on display, but also that of his wife, who was promoted to the role of 'queen of ceremonies'.

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[68] Adams, *The Life and Afterlife*, 135.

[69] Ibid., 196.

[70] Monique Chatenet, 'Les funérailles de Louise de Savoie,' in *Louise de Savoie (1476-131)*, eds Pascal Brioist, Laure Fragnart and Cédric Michon (Rennes: PUR, 2015), 155–63.

Chapter 6: The 'Queen of Ceremonies'

Over the past few decades, historians have been examining the major public ceremonies allowing the monarch to display and even reinforce his power. Aside from the coronation, the ancient ceremony that had long constituted his authority, three primary 'staged' events helped him to promote his political agenda: the *lits de justice*, over which he regularly presided at the Parlement of Paris, but which were intended for a select few (princes, prelates and members of the Parlement)[1]; his entries in the principal towns of the kingdom, during which his majesty was repeatedly on full display as he traveled from one place to the next and which provided the opportunity to communicate with urban areas[2]; and his funeral, which was the sovereign body's final journey to the Capetian necropolis at the Abbey of Saint-Denis.[3]

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[1] Elisabeth A.R. Brown and Richard Famiglietti, *The Lit de Justice: Semantics, Ceremonial and the Parlement of Paris, 1300-1600* (Sigmaringen: J. Thorbecke, 1994).

[2] Laurence Bryant, *The King and the City in the Parisian Royal Entry Ceremony: Politics, Ritual, and Art in the Renaissance* (Geneva: E. Droz, 1986); George Kipling, *Enter the King: Theatre, Liturgy, and Ritual in the Medieval City Triumph* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).

[3] Ralph Giesey, *The Royal Funeral Ceremony in Renaissance France* (Geneva: E. Droz, 1960); Alain Boureau, *Le simple corps du roi. L'impossible sacralité des souverains français, XV^{e}-XVIII^{e} siècle* (Paris: Éd. de Paris, 1988), 28–34; Elisabeth A.R. Brown, 'Royal Bodies, Effigies, Funeral Meals, and Office in Sixteenth-Century France', in *Le Cadavre, Anthropologie, archéologie, imaginaire social, Micrologus*, eds. Jacques Chiffoleau and Agostino Paravicini-Bagliani (Florence: Sismel Edizioni del Galluzzo, 1999), 7:437–508;

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With the exception of the coronation,[4] however, the political honors accorded to medieval queens remained in the shadows. According to historians, these honors only appeared toward the very end of the fifteenth century, when they were devised for Anne of Brittany, the first 'modern' queen who made two entries in Paris (1492 and 1504) and had an elaborate funeral (1514). In reality, the female sovereigns of the Middle Ages received such honors from as early as the second half of the fourteenth century, thus participating in the development of an increasingly ceremonial monarchy, which was established by the first members of the Valois dynasty. Far from being conceived as a competition between king and queen, the 'staging' of the queen's majesty was decided upon by her husband, who placed her alongside him at the heart of his 'communications strategy.' Only the *lit de justice* remained the king's prerogative, since he alone dispensed sovereign justice throughout the entire kingdom. Joan of Bourbon nonetheless participated in the special meeting of the Parlement of Paris in May 1369, during which hostilities against England were resumed.[5]

The Queen's Public Body: The Role of Representation

The role of the queen's representation—or her 'public body'—cannot simply be restricted to the major rituals defined by ceremonialists.[6] In their treaties, fifteenth- and sixteenth-century theorists thus included other mediums in the panoply of royal imagery. The goal in this chapter is not to note all of the females sovereigns' public appearances (many of which were religious in nature, such as processions and visits to churches and hospitals), but, rather, to examine their official role—whether it be

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and Brown, 'Refreshment of the Dead: *Post mortem* Meals, Anne de Bretagne, Jean Lemaire de Belges, and the Influence of Antiquity on Royal Ceremonial', in *Les funérailles à la Renaissance*, ed. Jean Balsamo (Geneva: Droz, 2002), 113–30.

[4] Claire Ritcher-Sherman, 'The Queen in Charles V's Coronation Book: Jeanne de Bourbon and the *Ordo ad reginam benedicendam*', *Viator* 8 (1977): 260–68.

[5] Brown and Famiglietti, *The Lit de Justice*, 23.

[6] For further information on these studies, see works by the following American scholars: Robert Jackson discusses the coronation —Robert A. Jackson, *Vivat Rex. Histoire des sacres et couronnements en France, 1364-1825* (Paris, 1984), Sarah Hanley the *lits de justice*, Laurence Bryant the entries —Laurence Bryant the entries -Laurence M. Bryant, *The King and the City in the Parisian Royal Entry Ceremony. Politics, Ritual and Art in the Renaissance* (Genève 1986) and Ralph Giesey the funerals —Ralph Giesey, Le roi ne meurt jamais. Les obsèques royales dans la France de la Renaissance (Paris: Flamarion, 1987).

protocolar or ceremonial—and to look beyond her main appearances at coronations, entries and funerals. Two major events involving the monarchy can be highlighted to explain the representational role they played: diplomatic visits and the semi-public Maundy ceremony.

Numerous accounts attest to the queen's participation in official receptions held for visiting sovereigns and ambassadors, during which she was said to play either the exceptionally active role of mediator or the passive and protocolar role of the king's double. Christine de Pizan provided an account in her biography of Charles V: 'When the king wanted to specifically honor these princes and ambassadors, he had them brought before the queen and his children, before whom pageantry was no less important.'[7]

The visit of Emperor Charles IV and his son Wenceslas in January 1378 is particularly enlightening. While Joan of Bourbon, who was then seven months pregnant, participated neither in the Parisian convoy organized for this event nor in the banquet held shortly afterward, she did receive them solemnly and 'with honor' in her apartments at the Hôtel Saint-Pol[8]: 'There was a crowd of great lords and knights. The queen came to meet the king (Charles V); she wore a magnificent outfit and had upon her head a small crown of great value, all in gold.'[9] Surrounded by princesses of royal birth and ladies-in-waiting, she played her role of hostess perfectly, advancing toward the emperor, who removed his hat to greet her before giving her the formal kiss reserved for diplomatic meetings—as illustrated in a beautiful illumination officially chronicling the reign of Charles V.[10] In the afternoon, it was the queen's turn to make the journey (this time to the heart of the palace) to honor the emperor in the company of her two sons Charles and Louis. They 'spoke together at length' (*parlèrent moult longuement ensemble*). She then offered him a splendid reliquary in jewel-encrusted gold and containing a fragment of the True Cross. As for

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[7] Christine de Pizan, *Le Livre des Faits et Bonnes Mœurs du roi Charles V le Sage*, trans. Eric Hicks and Thérèse Moreau (Paris: Stock – Moyen Âge, 1997), 248; Karen Green and C. J. Mews, *Healing the Body Politic: The Political Thought of Christine de Pizan* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005).

[8] Delachenal, *Chronique de Jean II et de Charles V, 1364-1380*, ed. Jules Delachenal (Paris: SHF, 1910-1920).

[9] Ibid., 272.

[10] Paris, BnF, Ms. Fr. 2813, fol. 477.

Wenceslas, he received a golden clasp as part of the classic ritual involving the exchange of diplomatic gifts.

Without seeking to provide an endless list of examples—many of which can be found during Isabeau of Bavaria's reign (although her diplomatic activities can be explained by the fact that she contributed to governing the kingdom during her husband's bouts of madness),[11] it is worth mentioning the interesting case of Charlotte of Savoy. The queen was not as self-effacing as historians would have one believe, for she was present beside her husband, Louis XI, during the official reception given in honor of Lev of Rožmitál, brother-in-law of the Hussite king George of Poděbrady, shortly after Pentecost in 1466.[12]

The representational role of the female sovereign did not end with these diplomatic visits. Other official ceremonies in which she was placed at her husband's side were staged, such as the Maundy ceremony, which took place in the semi-public space of the palace.[13] The washing of the feet of the poor on Holy Thursday, a gesture of humility once practiced by Saint Louis, had become one of the monarchy's major annual rituals and was copied by other European courts. In commemoration of Christ's act of washing his disciples' feet at the Last Supper on the Thursday preceding his death, the kings invited 12 or 13 of the poor to their palace to wash their feet before offering them a meal. Their wives in turn did the same, many of them repeating the commemorative gesture toward 'poor men' who symbolized the disciples, while others focused on women's feet. This was the case of Anne of Brittany, who welcomed 'twelve young poor and unmarried women' (*treize pouvres jeunes filles à marier*) in 1495.[14] Before the entire court and accompanied by their children and ladies-in-waiting, the female sovereigns humbly knelt before the poor, washing and drying their feet with 'toiles', which the account books show were purchased annually. Beginning as an individual act of humility under Saint Louis, the Maundy ceremony became a ritual—even a dramatic spectacle—and ended up being one of the essential public displays of royal charity.

[11] Tracy Adams, *The Life and Afterlife of Isabeau of Bavaria* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 9.

[12] Denise Péricard-Méa, *De la Bohême jusqu'à Compostelle* (Biarritz: Atlantica, 2008), 204.

[13] Priscille Aladjidi, *Le roi père des pauvres, France XIII^{e}-XV^{e} siècle* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2008), 330–54.

[14] Paris, AN, KK 85, fol. 40.

THE QUEEN’S ALLEGORICAL BODY: ENTRY CEREMONIES

The Body in All Its Majesty: Isabeau of Bavaria’s 1389 Entry in Paris

The first *grande entrée* of a queen was organized in 1389 for Isabeau of Bavaria.[15] This occurred only a few years after the first of such rituals was held for the male sovereign (in 1350 for John II the Good and in 1380 for Charles VI). Up until then, entry ceremonies had been remarkably simple, linked to the *droit de gîte* (right to food and lodging) and marked by such highlights as the king’s oath, his prayer in the town’s main church and the municipality’s offering of gifts. These ceremonies became more complex when John II first entered the capital in 1350. The streets were draped with fabrics (*encourtinées*), and a procession from the city came to welcome the king on the outskirts of Paris. The innovations were even more considerable for Charles VI’s return from his coronation in Reims in November 1380. Theatrical presentations, referred to as ‘mystères’ in the documents of the period, punctuated the journey through Paris (although the themes of these performances are unknown). In the streets, much to the surprise and admiration of onlookers, artificial fountains overflowed with milk, wine and water, which symbolized the kingdom’s anticipated prosperity at the dawn of a new reign.[16]

Nine years later, Charles VI’s wife Isabeau received the same honors. Her entry in Paris on Sunday, 22 August 1389 was exceptional. As Charles VI and his advisors had decided upon their return to power in the autumn of 1388 (after the regency of Charles VI’s uncles Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, and John, Duke of Berry), this entry inaugurated a new presentation not only of the queen’s public body (dressed in an outfit covered in fleurs-de-lis), but also of her allegorical body, which was likened to that of the Virgin Mary. The king accorded a considerable sum of money to this event, nearly 15,000 livres parisis,[17] which in itself attests to how important he considered this moment to be.

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[15] Murielle Gaude-Ferragu, ‘Le “double corps” de la reine : l’entrée d’Isabeau de Bavière à Paris (22 août 1389)’, in *Le Corps du Prince*, *Micrologus*, eds. Éric Bousmar et al. (Florence: Sismel Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2014), 22:139–69.

[16] Bernard Guenée and Françoise Lehoux, *Les entrées royales françaises de 1328 à 1515* (Paris: IRHT, 1968), 11.

[17] Paris, AN, KK 20, fol. 12.

While Parisians already knew of the queen, who had married Charles VI in 1385, she had never been crowned. This was therefore an occasion to organize a 'Joyful Entry' (*Joyeuse Entrée*) into the capital, especially since the queen was pregnant (her baby would be born less than three months later). On this occasion, the entry preceded the coronation, which took place the following day at the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris. The king asked Blanche of Navarre, Philip VI of Valois's widow, to plan the details of the ceremony. She had the ancient texts, notably the *Chronicle of Saint-Denis*, consulted but was unable to find anything precisely fitting the occasion.[18] Blanche, along with the king and his advisors, thus invented a few aspects of the ceremony, which for the first time put only the female sovereign's body on display.

This honor was no different from the one accorded to the king in 1380. Isabeau was first welcomed with a procession at the gates of the city, where she was greeted by the provost of merchants Jean Jouvenel and the burghers of Paris dressed in green liveries. A total of 1200 people in addition to the members of the royal *hôtel*, who all wore red, lined up to form a guard of honor. The journey, which had remained unchanged since the entry in 1380, went from Saint-Denis Gate to the heart of Paris, ending at Notre-Dame Cathedral on the Île de la Cité. Streets along the procession route were draped with embellished tapestries,[19] and *tableaux vivants* (*mystères*) were performed.

The queen was the center of attention, paraded on an uncovered litter, wearing a crown, and dressed in a 'silk dress dotted with golden fleurs-de-lis'.[20] This new sartorial aspect of the ceremony would become one of the principal elements of the majestic costume worn by the female sovereign,[21] an exact replica of the garment covered in fleurs-de-lis that monarchs wore for both coronations and all the major ceremonies of their reign.[22] This choice of clothing was carefully thought out, since Isabeau—a princess of foreign birth—had to visually embody royal majesty for her first big public appearance. The wealth displayed by her golden crown sparkling with jewels also reflected her dignity. The royal account books say that it was made by the Parisian goldsmith Jean du Vivier, who decorated it with 93 diamonds, hundreds of pearls, balais rubies and sapphires.[23] The beautiful illumination on the title page of Book IV of Jean Froissart's *Chronicles*, which was painted in Bruges during the last third of the fifteenth century, wonderfully depicts the queen's central position during this event.[24] Welcomed at Notre-Dame by the Bishop of Paris, Isabeau is dressed in royal clothing (a robe and cloak in ermine and covered in fleurs-de-lis). She stands under a canopy (which, in fact, was never used, but which had become one of the symbols of the royal entry since Charles VI traveled to the Languedoc region in the autumn of 1389), donning a bejeweled crown and holding two golden scepters (which are not described in the written sources).

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[18] *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denys*, 611.

[19] Jean Froissart, *Chroniques*, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove (Brussels: V. Devaux, 1872), 15:10.

[20] *Chronique du religieux de Saint-Denys*, 611.

[21] Murielle Gaude-Ferragu, 'Habit réel, habit imaginé. La reine de France en majesté (XIV^e^-début du XVI^e^ siècle)', *Revue de l'Art*, *Costume de cour au XVI^e^ siècle* 174, no. 4 (2011): 9–19.

[22] Monique Chatenet and Anne-Marie Lecoq, 'Le roi et ses doubles. Usages vestimentaires royaux au XVI^e^ siècle', *Revue de l'Art*, *Costume de cour au XVI^e^ siècle* 174, no. 4 (2011): 21–31.

In the convoy, the queen was surrounded by the most important princes and ladies of the court. At its head stood the king's brother Louis of Touraine and Louis, Duke of Bourbon. John of Berry and Philip the Bold were in the center, while Pierre of Navarre, Count of Mortain, and William of Bavaria, Count of Ostrevant (representing the queen's family), stood at the back. The convoy also included princesses and grandes dames of the court, particularly Louis of Touraine's young wife Valentina Visconti as well as the Duchesses of Berry (Joan of Boulogne), Burgundy (Margaret of Flanders) and Bar (Marie of France). As the queen's body alone was supposed to be honored, the king remained invisible during this time, 'hidden away' at the Palais de la Cité where he awaited Isabeau's arrival until evening—as if one majesty had to step aside for the other during an entry.

The Virginal Allegory: Tableaux Vivants

Paris also paid homage to the queen by staging 'hystoires', *tableaux vivants* for her to view at the city gates and in various public spaces. These allegorical works combined religious themes and political symbolism in complex scenes. Performed by brotherhoods and guilds, they were conceived during the council of city officials, who—in the absence of the municipal magistrate position that Charles VI had suppressed in 1383 following the Maillotin Uprising—were represented by the provost of merchants Jean Jouvenel. While indeed representing the burghers (since he had the same rank as the previous provost), Jouvenal primarily represented the king and his advisors. The shadow of Philippe de Mézières, who had withdrawn to the convent of the Celestines in Paris, was not far away either. The former advisor to Charles V had just completed his *Songe du Vieil Pèlerin*, the political agenda of which seemed to inspire a few scenes.[25]

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[23] Paris, AN, KK 20, fol. 109 v°.

[24] *Maître du Froissart de Commynes*, London, British Library, Ms. Harlay 4379, fol. 3.

Three sketches were exclusively devoted to the monarch, addressing the Indo-European king's three essential roles. In the first, the King of Justice, standing in front of the Châtelet, appeared with a representation of a *lit de justice* and a stag (Charles VI's motto) being attacked by an eagle and a lion and saved by 12 virgins whose defense of the stag and the *lit* symbolized their defense of the King of France and the justice he represented.[26] The allegory was also mystical. The image of the stag referred to Christ, who rose from the dead and vanquished both evil (the snake) and death.[27] Next came the King of War, standing in front of Trinité Hospital. He was the king of a just war waged against infidels and led a representation of the poem the *Pas Saladin*, which depicted a battle between the Christians (led by Philip Augustus and Richard the Lionheart) and the Muslims (led by the sultan Saladin). The final sketch depicted the Nurturing King, who was being celebrated at the fountain of Ponceau. Young girls offered the wine flowing from its pipes to Parisians in golden cups as a symbol of the prosperity the sovereign granted the kingdom. The tableau also likened him to the Savior who transformed water into wine, which was in turn likened to redeeming blood.[28]

Since the Queen-Virgin corresponded to the King-Christ, two sketches were devoted to the female sovereign. The first, set at Saint-Denis Gate, was performed under a backdrop decorated with a starry sky and adorned with Isabeau's coat of arms and a blazing sun (Charles VI's motto).

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[25] Philippe de Mézières, *Songe du Vieux Pèlerin*, ed. Joël Blanchard (Paris: Pocket, 2008); De Mézières, *Le Songe du Vieil Pèlerin*, ed. George William Coopland (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969).

[26] Françoise Autrand, *Charles VI* (Paris: Fayard, 1986), 231.

[27] Michel Pastoureau, *Bestiaires du Moyen Âge* (Paris: Seuil, 2011), 66–68.

[28] George Kipling, 'The Design and Construction of Royal Entries in the Late Middle Ages', *Medieval English Theatre* 32 (2011 for 2010): 26; Kipling, *Enter the King*, 54–73 and 163–67.

Surrounded by angelic musicians and carrying the infant Jesus, the Virgin Mary welcomed the Queen of France at the gates of Heaven. This maternal image referred to Isabeau's pregnancy. The second sketch, which was performed before the old Saint-Denis Gate, further likened the earthly queen to the heavenly queen. A castle sat on a platform under a starry sky. A depiction of the Holy Trinity surrounded by angelic musicians set the scene in Heaven. When the queen entered, two angels placed a golden crown covered in jewels on her head while singing the following verses:

> Lady of the lilied gown
> Queen you are of Paris town,
> Of France and all this fair countrie:
> Now back to paradise go we.[29]

This depicted a well-known scene for the faithful, one that appears in both the Parisian *mystères* and medieval iconography: the Coronation of the Virgin Mary. In her very own act of Assumption, the Queen of France was crowned by two angels.[30] The phrase 'Lady of the lilied gown' evokes both the queen's place in the prestigious dynasty of Christian kings and the image of the Virgin Mary herself—who was both the Lady of the Lilies dispensing grace and the celestial model of the earthly queen, herself a flowering lily with royal blood running through her veins.

Like Mary, who was the principal celestial intermediary, Isabeau had a duty to protect Paris and the entire kingdom, mediating between the king and his people. After the Maillotin Uprising and the severe repression that followed, her entry presented an opportunity for the 'reconciliation of hearts' desired by all. In January 1389, the king had already re-established a dialogue with the capital, naming a new provost of merchants there.[31] Isabeau's entry allowed Charles VI to exercise his *droit de grâce*, granting pardon to all who had been banished from Paris so they could return to the capital.[32] The queen's mediation, though symbolic, had been effective.

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[29] Jean Froissart, *Chronicles*, trans. Geoffrey Brereton (London: Penguin Books, 1978), accessed 18 September 2014, http://books.google.fr/books?id=bXxkqjt1TsoC&printsec=frontcover&dq=jean+froissart+chronicles&hl=en&sa=X&ei=CxobVKLBB4fnaK_wgbAO&ved=0CCgQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=lilied%20gown&f=.

[30] Kipling, *Enter the King*, 294.

[31] Autrand, *Charles VI*, 229.

[32] *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denys*, 1:609.

The Last Medieval Queens: The Entries of Charlotte of Savoy and Anne of Brittany

Not all entries occurred in Paris. Indeed, this ceremony had the advantage of being repeatable throughout the kingdom. Far from being excluded from the public sphere, Louis XI's wife Charlotte of Savoy made at least two entries, during which she received royal honors: one in Amiens in January 1464 and one in Paris in September 1467. The first ceremony, held in the Picardy region of France, was particularly important, since it was the first royal entry to take place in this part of the Somme department—which Louis XI had just purchased from Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, in September 1463. The queen, who was pregnant at the time, was welcomed with a procession just outside the city, where the mayor and municipal magistrates greeted her.[33] The bishop and his canons awaited her in the square outside Notre-Dame Cathedral, where she was on her way to pray. 'All night long there were bonfires, songs and role-playing in celebration of her.'[34]

Following his coronation in Reims, Louis XI had entered Paris in August 1461. However, the queen was unable to accompany him, having recently given birth to her second daughter Anne. Her entry in the capital did not occur until six years later in September 1467, marking the end of the troubles linked to the War of the Public Good. Here again, the same elements constituting the royal entry are found: the welcoming of the procession by the presidents and advisors of the Parlement of Paris along with the bishop and local burghers, prayer at Notre-Dame Cathedral, bonfires and singing. The altar boys of Paris's Sainte-Chapelle left the palace for the occasion and sang 'beautiful virelays, songs, and bergerettes most melodically'.[35] The procession route was dotted with numerous *tableaux vivants*, which were performed in the square outside Notre-Dame, the Church of the Celestines and the Hôtel royal des Tournelles. One original feature of the celebration was that Charlotte of Savoy and her ladies-in-waiting arrived not by land, but by way of a boat on the Seine. Advisors and Parisian burghers escorted the party whilst traveling in their own richly adorned boats. The highlight of the spectacle was the performance of an allegorical and culinary *mystère*, displaying a magnificent stag 'made of confits, which had the queen's coat of arms hanging from its neck'.[36]

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[33] Amiens, Archives municipales d'Amiens, BB 9, fol. 135 v°-fol. 139 and CC 47, fol. 37 v°.

[34] 'Et toute la nuit furent faits feux, chansons, et jeux de personnages, pour la joye d'elle.' Amiens, Archives municipales d'Amiens, CC 47, fol. 55.

[35] 'De beaux virelais, chansons et autres bergerettes moult mélodieusement.' Jean de Roye, *Chronique scandaleuse*, ed. Bernard de Mandrot (Paris: SHF, 1894 and 1896), 1:177–78.

There is no mention of a canopy above Charlotte of Savoy, although this had been included in all the royal entries of kings since 1389. One insignia, however, distinguished Anne of Brittany during her first entry in Paris in February 1492—just after the celebration of her coronation at the Basilica of Saint-Denis and two months after her wedding to Charles VIII—as well as during her second entry in November 1504 (also following her coronation at Saint-Denis and five years after her marriage to Louis XII).[37] During this second ceremony, Anne entered Paris on a litter. She wore a dress of golden satin lined in ermine. The quality of the fabric, which connoted triumph and magnificence, reflected her majesty. Sketches celebrating the birth of Christ (with beautiful depictions of the Gift of the Magi) were performed throughout the capital, likening the pregnant queen to the Virgin Mother.[38]

The Queen's 'Final Triumph': Death and Funerals

Saint-Denis: The Tomb of Queens

To any visitor discovering the double tombs at the Basilica of Saint-Denis,[39] whether they be the recumbent statues of Charles V and Joan of Bourbon or the magnificent sixteenth-century tombs, such as those of Louis XII and Anne of Brittany, one thing is clear: female sovereigns have been laid to rest next to their husbands in the royal necropolis since ancient times. Yet the reality was in fact much more complex. While a few rare Merovingian, Carolingian and Capetian queens were interred in the abbey's lower depths, their burial at Saint-Denis only became systematic much later, in the fourteenth century. Double burial, which became widespread in the Medieval West as early as the thirteenth century, was nonetheless advocated by ecclesial authorities (following the example set by Abraham and Sarah).[40]

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[36] Ibid., 178.

[37] Fanny Cosandey, 'Anne de Bretagne, une princesse de la Renaissance', in *Anne de Bretagne. Une histoire, un mythe*, (Paris: Somogy Éditions d'art, 2007), 34.

[38] Didier Le Fur, Anne de Bretagne*: miroir d'une reine, historiographie d'un mythe*, (Paris: Guénégaud, 2000), 93.

[39] Alain Erlande-Brandenburg, 'Le cimetière des rois à Saint-Denis et la politique funéraire de Saint Louis', *Tombeaux royaux et princiers, Dossiers Archéologie et science des origines* 311 (2006): 32–38; Jean-Michel Leniaud and Philippe Plagnieux, *La basilique Saint-Denis* (Paris: Éditions du Patrimoine, 2012).

For a long time, the Saint-Denis necropolis was reserved only for kings. Their wives were destined for funerary transience, which led them to a variety of resting places depending on the degree of their religious devotion or their affective and dynastic preferences. At the end of the thirteenth century, the capital's convents were favored resting places, Paris being at the heart of royalty and the place where female sovereigns resided. These included the Jacobins Convent (where Clementia of Hungary, Louis X's widow, chose to be buried in 1328) and the Cordeliers Convent in Paris. Philip IV's wife Joan of Navarre chose to be buried at the Cordeliers Convent in 1305,[41] undoubtedly influenced by her Franciscan confessor. She was soon joined by Philip III's second wife Marie of Brabant (in 1321) and Philip V's wife Joan of Burgundy (in 1330).

Nonetheless, Saint-Denis progressively became the new 'cemetery of queens', a shift linked to the sovereigns' new funerary policy. This was the resting place of Philip III's first wife Isabella of Aragon, who died in Calabria upon her return from the Crusade to Tunis in 1271. However, Philip IV's reign marked the major turning point. The king decided to have Margaret of Provence, his grandmother and Louis IX's widow, interred in the abbey after her death in 1295.[42] Ten years later, he wanted his wife Joan of Navarre to lie there. However, in a secret act that was only revealed after her death, she manifested her desire for independence by opting for a Franciscan burial site in Paris.[43] Again in 1306, the king ordered that the tombs in the abbey be reorganized, placing Philip Augustus, Louis VIII, Louis IX and Margaret of Provence in the center. Family gradually prevailed over the dynastic principal. Thus, the queen, as mother of the children of France and the one who—while not having authority—still had royal dignity, entered the 'cemetery of kings'. Interment at Saint-Denis, however, was still far from systematic.

The shift occurred under the Valois dynasty. As soon as she dictated her first testament in May 1329, Philip VI's wife Joan of Burgundy chose

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[40] Guillaume Durand, *Rational des divins offices*, trans. Charles Barthelemy (Paris: J. Frantz, 1854), 1:80.

[41] Elisabeth A.R., 'La mort, les testaments et les fondations de Jeanne de Navarre, reine de France (1273-1305)', in *Une histoire pour un royaume (XII^e^-XV^e^ siècle)* (Paris: Perrin, 2010), 124–41.

[42] Colette Beaune, *Naissance de la nation France* (Paris: Gallimard, 1985), 165.

[43] Elisabeth A.R., 'La mort, les testaments et les fondations de Jeanne de Navarre, reine de France (1273-1305)', in *Une histoire pour un royaume (XII^e^-XV^e^ siècle)* (Paris: Perrin, 2010), 124–41.

'Saint Denis Church near His Grace' as her resting place.[44] She reiterated this decision in her second testament (dictated in 1336) in addition to insisting that she be buried as close as possible to her husband. The 'change of branch' in 1328 established the necessity of creating double tombs, uniting for eternity the royal couple who guaranteed the legitimacy and continuity of the line—especially since Joan of Burgundy was a Capetian princess and therefore the direct granddaughter of Saint Louis through her mother Agnes of France. She thus constituted the direct line, both materially and symbolically, between the Capetians and the Valois. Following Philip VI and Joan of Burgundy, all royal couples were interred at Saint-Denis in double tombs that were either commissioned while the king was still alive (as was the case of Charles V and Joan of Bourbon) or posthumously (Charles VI and Isabeau of Bavaria[45]). The princesses who had not reigned, however, were distanced. When she died in 1349, Bonne of Luxembourg, who had been the wife of the future John II, was only Duchess of Normandy. She was buried at the Cistercian Abbey of Maubuisson. Louis XI's first wife Margaret of Scotland died while he was still only the dauphin in 1445. In accordance with her wishes, she was buried at Saint-Laon in Thouars.[46] Louis XI's second wife Charlotte of Savoy was buried near the king at Notre-Dame de Cléry, which he had chosen as his final resting place.[47]

Charles VIII, Louis XII and Anne of Brittany renewed the tradition of the Saint-Denis necropolis. Louis XII and Anne of Brittany's multilevel double tomb, which was ordered by Francis I, upset all the existing funerary canons of the royal world (such as recumbent statues of the dead wearing crowns and holding the scepter while patiently awaiting the Resurrection). On the upper level, praying figures wear majestic garments evoking the sovereign's body of glory. Below, naked, prostrate figures represent their mortal bodies. The representation of Anne's body, marked by the suffering she endured while dying, already displays the first signs of decomposition with its tensed muscles, mouth half-open in a final gasp and skin taut against the skeleton.[48]

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[44] Murielle Gaude-Ferragu, 'Les dernières volontés de la reine de France. Les deux testaments de Jeanne de Bourgogne, femme de Philippe VI de Valois (1329, 1336)', in *Annuaire-Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de France*, Année 2007 (2007): 23–66.

[45] Alain Erlande-Brandenburg et al., *Le roi, la sculpture et la mort. Gisants et tombeaux de la basilique de Saint-Denis* (Paris: Archives départementales de la Seine-Saint-Denis, 1976), 26.

[46] *Autour de Marguerite d'Écosse. Reines, princesses et dames du XV siècle,* eds. Geneviève and Philippe Contamine (Paris: Champion, 1999), 8.

[47] Murielle Gaude-Ferragu, 'L'honneur de la reine : la mort et les funérailles de Charlotte de Savoie (1er-14 décembre 1483)', *Revue Historique* 652 (2010): 779–804.

The Divided Body: Multiple Resting Places

The remains of female sovereigns, like those of their husbands, were divided and dispersed among two or three resting places that served as tombs for their bodies, hearts and entrails. Initially linked to embalming issues involving the need to remove the organs that putrefied the quickest, the division of the body became a conscious choice from the mid-thirteenth century onward, when Blanche of Castile decided that her body would be buried at Maubuisson and her heart at Notre-Dame du Lys in Melun.[49] This later became a frequent practice under the Capetians, despite the pontifical ban against it in Boniface VIII's 1299 bull *Detestante Feritatis*—thus explaining why female sovereigns were often careful to obtain the pope's prior permission for this.[50]

Their motivation was above all spiritual, linked to their devotion to a given sanctuary (the Franciscans of Paris welcomed the hearts of numerous queens, such as Joan of Évreux and Joan of Bourbon), but also affective (Philip V's wife Joan of Burgundy had her entrails interred at the Church of the Cordeliers in Longchamp, where her daughter Blanche was a nun[51]).

Dynasties and territories were also at stake. Clementia of Hungary's chosen burial place for her heart at the Dominican Church of Notre-Dame de Nazareth in Aix-en-Provence attested to her deep attachment to her Anjou ancestry. Indeed, Charles II of Naples both founded and was buried at this royal convent.[52] Similarly, Philip VI's wife Joan of Burgundy chose to have her heart interred in her native duchy. The Abbey of Cîteaux was also where the princes of Burgundy were buried. She therefore joined her parents in the tomb, recalling her place in a prestigious line of dukes and duchesses. Again in the early sixteenth century, Anne of Brittany decided to have her heart buried in the tomb of her parents Francis II, Duke of Brittany, and Margaret of Foix at the Church of the Carmes in Nantes, returning to her native principality in death. She thus affirmed her dual identity as Queen of France at Saint-Denis and Duchess of Brittany in Nantes.

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[48] Marion Boudon-Machuel, 'Une nouvelle conception du tombeau royal. Les tombeaux de Louis XII et François I^{er}', in *Tombeaux royaux et princiers*, 102.

[49] Elisabeth A.R. Brown, 'Death and the Human Body in the Later Middle Ages: The Legislation of Boniface VIII on the Division of the Corpse', in *The Monarchy of Capetian France and Royal Ceremonial* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1991), 232–34; Alexandre Bande, *Le cœur du roi. Les Capétiens et les sépultures multiples, XIII^{e}-XV^{e} siècles* (Paris: Tallandier, 2009).

[50] Pierre Moret de Bourchenu, marquis de Valbonnays, 'Testament de Clémence de Hongrie, reyne de France, seconde femme de Louis Hutin', in *Histoire de Dauphiné et des princes qui ont porté le nom de dauphins* (Geneva: Fabri et Barillot, 1722), 217–21.

[51] Paris, AN, J 404 A n° 23.

[52] Noël Coulet, 'Un couvent royal : les Dominicaines de Notre-Dame-de-Nazareth d'Aix au XIII^{e} siècle', in *Cahiers de Fanjeaux* (Toulouse: Privat, 1973), 8: 233–62.

'The Queen is Dead, Long Live the Queen?'

During the Late Middle Ages, the death of a member of the royal family was ritualized, oscillating between the realms of religion and politics. The queen's final moments are in most cases unknown. Chroniclers divulged little, mostly sharing stereotypical details about her good Christian death and chosen burial place. Saint Louis's mother Blanche of Castile, however, was an exception to this, since her death was proposed as a model to the queens who succeeded her. Conscious of her approaching demise in November 1252, Blanche became a nun and received the Cistercian habit worn by the nuns of Maubuisson. Dressed in this habit and humbly lying on a low bed of straw covered with a sheet, the queen expired.[53] Guillaume de Saint-Pathus, chronicler and Louis IX's hagiographer, insisted on her extreme piety and wrote that the queen's death prefigured that of her son. She was later accompanied to her resting place by her sons Alphonse of Poitiers and Charles of Anjou along with a throng of barons. She wore royal garments over her nun's habit and a crown on her head.[54] Her role as regent meant that the celebrations held in her honor were exceptionally grand.

A female sovereign's funeral did not attract the attention of chroniclers again until a century later. In this respect, the funerals of Joan of Évreux in 1371 and Joan of Bourbon in 1378 marked both a documentary (a lengthy description is included in the *Grandes Chroniques de France*) and ceremonial turning point. Organized by Charles V and his advisors, these funerals were identical to those held for royal men. With her face made visible (although a light veil masked the first signs of decomposition), Joan of

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[53] Bande, *Le cœur du roi*, 60–61.

[54] Ibid., 62; Alain Erlande-Brandenburg, *Le roi est mort. Études sur les funérailles, les sépultures et les tombeaux des rois de France jusqu'à la fin du XIII^{e} siècle* (Paris: Arts et métiers graphiques, 1975), 23.

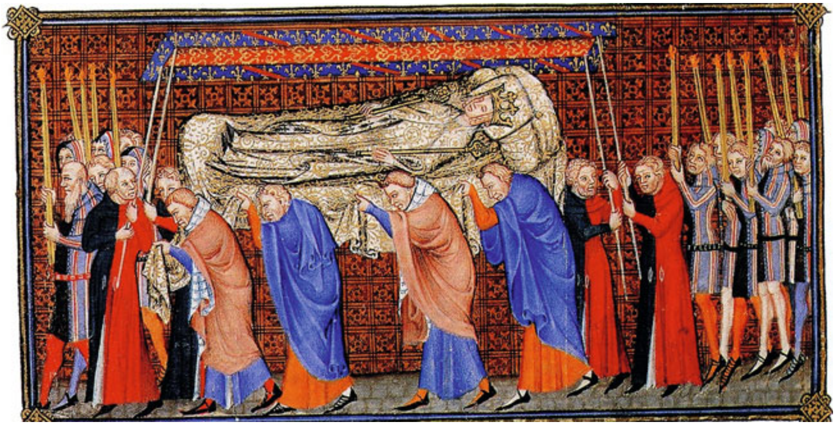

Fig. 6.1 Joan of Bourbon's funeral convoy (1378), Paris, BnF, Fr. 2813, fol. 480 v°.

Évreux's body was thus carried through the streets of Paris. She received all the honors associated with her status, surrounded by the presidents of the Parlement of Paris holding the pall and the provost of merchants and municipal magistrates holding a canopy of golden cloth on six spears. Charles V followed the remains, which marked one of the last occasions on which a king would participate in a funeral.[55]

His wife Joan of Bourbon, who died in 1378, received the same honors. Her body lay in state and her face was made visible, which was a specific element of royal convoys. This ritual of sovereignty, equally practiced by the kings of England and the papacy,[56] allowed the deceased to be exhibited in all her or his majesty whilst bearing the insignias of power. The queen was carried on a litter covered with a pall of golden cloth and over which hung a canopy of red gold carried by the provost of merchants and the municipal magistrates of Paris (Fig. 6.1).

She wore a crown on her head and held in one hand 'a small golden baton, of which the exterior was crafted to look like a rose, and in her other hand was a scepter’.[57] Many well-known figures, both men (prelates, officers of the king and princes, including her brother Louis II of Bourbon) and women (the Dowager Queen Blanche of Navarre, the Duchess Blanche of Orléans and ladies-in-waiting), came to pay their final respects. Charles V remained absent (perhaps wanting to step aside so that only the queen’s dignity was on full display). As for his successors, they would no longer participate in the funerals of their closest relatives, as if the proximity of a cadaver—a potential source of impurity—was no longer suitable for the sacred majesty of a ‘highly Christian king’.

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[55] *Chronique des règnes de Jean II et de Charles V*, 2:152.

[56] Ibid., 279–82; Agostino Paravicini-Bagliani, *La cour des papes au XIII^{e} siècle* (Paris: Hachette Littérature - Vie quotidienne, 1995).

During the fifteenth century, the main ceremonial innovation was the appearance of an effigy, a funerary mannequin with a wooden body and waxen face and hands made in the deceased’s exact ‘likeness’. Since the interval between death and burial was now considerably longer, the decomposing body could no longer be put ‘on display’ in the traditional manner. Adopted in France (after the English model) for the funeral of Charles VI in 1422, the effigy was quickly introduced into the reginal ceremony. This was the case of Isabeau of Bavaria, who died in Paris in 1435 (15 days passing between her death at the Hôtel Saint-Pol and her Dionysian burial): ‘Her representation was extremely well done, for she was laid out so perfectly that it seemed as if she was sleeping, and she held a royal scepter in her right hand.’[58]

No effigy figured in the convoy for Charles VII’s widow Marie of Anjou, whose funeral was celebrated in Paris on 26 January1464. The queen had died at the Abbey of Châtelliers in December 1463 after returning from a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela.[59] There was, however, a mannequin representing Queen Charlotte of Savoy in the convoy that led her body to Notre-Dame de Cléry in December 1483. Indeed, an exceptional account book held at the French National Archives mentions that Jean Bourdichon, the king’s official painter, received a payment for fashioning a wooden body ‘the size of the said lady’ and painting the waxen face ‘according to her likeness’.[60] The effigy was carried on a litter covered by a canopy of red and gold cloth adorned with shields bearing the queen’s coat of arms (for France and Savoy). Wearing a crown and royal garments (a surcoat bearing the queen's coat of arms divided palewise and a coat in ermine covered in fleur-de-lis), the effigy was designed to hold the scepter and the Hand of Justice. The only difference from most royal ceremonies was that the geographic distance meant that the presidents of the Parlement of Paris and the municipal magistrates from the capital were unable to participate.

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[57] ‘Un petit baston d’or, ouvré par dessus en la façon d’une rose et en l’autre main avoit un sceptre.’ *Chronique des règnes de Jean II et de Charles V*, 2:279–82.

[58] ‘Était sa représentation moult bien faite, car elle était couchée si proprement qu’il semblait qu’elle dormît, et tenait un sceptre royal en sa main dextre.’ Beaune, *Journal d’un bourgeois de Paris*, 343.

[59] Chevalier, ‘Marie d’Anjou, une reine sans gloire’, 81–98.

[60] Paris, AN, KK 69, fol. 116–55.

They were, however, present at Anne of Brittany's funeral, which was celebrated in Paris in 1514 (after her death at the Castle of Blois on 9 January). Described by her herald Pierre Choque, her funeral maintained the medieval traditions of convoy, canopy, effigy and regalia.[61] Three new elements were nonetheless introduced, marking in at least one case France's entry into the Renaissance era. Other than the new act of displaying the royal remains in the reception room, meals were served twice a day before an empty seat, as if the queen was still alive: 'The noble queen … since her death and until she was returned to her mother the earth was, both at dinner and supper, served at a cloth-covered table, with *Benedicite* and grace said in the lady-in-waiting's room.'[62] This custom was inspired by a classical account of the Scythians' funerals by Herodotus, which Louis XII's historiographer Jean Lemaire de Belges had revived.[63] Finally, during the deceased's burial at the Abbey of Saint-Denis, the proclamation of succession which had been made during the funerals for all the kings of France since 1422 was introduced into the reginal ritual: 'The most Christian queen and duchess, our sovereign lady and mistress, is dead; the queen is dead; the queen is dead' (*La très crestienne royne et duchesse, nostre souveraine dame et maistresse, est morte; la royne est morte; la royne est morte*). The insignias of her power—the Hand of Justice, the scepter and the crown—were each laid in her tomb, while the *maîtres d'hôtel* broke their rods, the queen's death putting an end to their role. For the kings, the proclamation of succession took place in two steps: the announcement of one king's death (the king is dead) and the inaugural cry for the next ('Long live the king'). Here, nothing was said of the queen's succession. This seems logical when one considers her mere status as queen, since, legally speaking, she did not have a successor. Her dignity thus died along with her, without jeopardizing her dynastic permanency. However, Anne was also Duchess of Brittany, which meant that her eldest daughter Claude succeeded her. The proclamation did not mention this, thus serving the interests of Louis XII (who organized her funeral) and his presumed successor Francis I, who, by creating an amalgam between queen and duchess, obliterated any chance of ducal succession.[64] The duchy was thus handed over to the crown and not Claude of France.

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[61] Lucien Merlet and Max de Gombert, eds., *Récit des funérailles d'Anne de Bretagne par Bretaigne, son héraut d'armes* (Paris: Aubry, 1858), 72; Cosandey, *La reine de France*, 209; and Didier Le Fur, 'Les funérailles d'Anne de Bretagne', *303. Arts, Recherches et créations* 77 (July 2003): 18–29.

[62] 'La noble royne … depuys sa mort jusques à ce qu'elle a esté en sa mère la terre a tousjours, tant au diner qu'au soupper, esté servy de table et nappe mise, *Benedicite* et graces dictes en la chambre de la dame d'honneur.' *Récit des funérailles d'Anne de Bretagne*, 65–66.

[63] Brown, 'Refreshment of the Dead', 113–30.

During both entries and funerals, the queen’s body was thus ‘staged’, adorned with all the attributes of a sovereign and incarnating royal dignity in the same way as the king. This assimilation was made using regalia (crown, scepter and floral rod, the latter of which was eventually replaced by the Hand of Justice) and ornate clothing, such as Isabeau of Bavaria’s azure gown decorated with golden lilies (1389) or Charlotte of Savoy’s ceremonial surcoat and ermine coat covered in fleur-de-lis (1483). The queen became the chromatic double of her husband and the living image of royalty, which was embodied by two people.

The female sovereign’s ceremonial promotion was accompanied by her funerary promotion. After being distanced from the ‘cemetery of kings’ for many centuries, she first entered it under Philip IV before her entry became systematic after the Valois came to power. The king’s wife, guarantor of dynastic continuity, was completely incorporated in the line of the fleur-de-lis. From then on, royalty only became monumental when embodied by a couple, in life (statues at the Louvre) as in death (double tombs).

Far from being specific to the kingdom of France (and thus linked to the necessary legitimization of the Valois), this promotion also occurred in England during the late middle ages, where the queen was buried in splendor beside her husband at Westminster Abbey. Queens such as Anne of Bohemia in 1392 enjoyed *grandes entrées* in the streets of London, where *tableaux vivants* were performed celebrating her part in the kingdom’s anticipated prosperity and her role as ‘lady of peace.’ Like Isabeau in 1389, she was also likened to the Virgin Mary.[65]

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[64] Cosandey, *La reine de France*, 219.

[65] Joanna L. Laynesmith, *The last medieval Queens* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 86 (on entries) and 119–21 (on funerals); John C. Parsons, ‘“Never was a body buried in England with such solemnity and honour”: The Burials and Posthumous Commemorations of English Queens in 1500’, in *Queens and Queenship in Medieval Europe* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1997), 318.

PART III

The Symbolic Government

Chapter 7: Courtly Society: The Queen in Her *Hôtel*

The magnificent illumination that adorns Christine de Pizan's *Collected Works* allows the reader to enter the queen's personal chambers at the heart of the 'chamber of ladies' in the most private realm of the palace. The ceiling, with its delicate red and green beams, is paneled, and wall hangings alternately bearing the coats of arms of France and Bavaria cover every wall. The same coats of arms decorate the bed of state, which is dressed with a red bedspread embroidered with gold. Isabeau of Bavaria, surrounded by her ladies-in-waiting, is herself seated on a red couch. She is dressed in an embroidered houppelande with ermine furs. Christine de Pizan, kneeling before her, offers up her *Collected Works*.[1]

This more intimate chapter on the queen's apartments and *hôtel* delves straight into the heart of courtly society, which became increasingly important in the Late Middle Ages. The notion of the court is a complex one that is difficult to capture because it was ever-changing. It encompassed all of the officers, servants, advisors and secular and ecclesiastical

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[1] See the illumination in Chap. 1, Fig. 1.2, depicting Isabeau of Bavaria. London, British Library, Ms. Harley 4431; Sandra Hindman, 'The Iconography of Queen Isabeau de Bavière (1410-1415): An Essay in Method', *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, no. 102 (1983): 102; and Philippe Contamine, 'Espaces féminins, espaces masculins dans quelques demeures aristocratiques françaises, XIV^{e}-XVI^{e} siècles', in *Das Frauenzimmer. Die Frau bei Hofe in Spätmittelalter und früher Neuzeit* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 2000), 79–90.

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M. Gaude-Ferragu, *Queenship in Medieval France, 1300–1500*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-349-93028-9_8

lords that constituted the entourage of the sovereign and his wife.[2] The *hôtel* was the central hub of court life. Structured around six offices, it assumed a magnitude during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries that was previously unheard of, directly contributing to the representation of power.[3] Etiquette took shape, defining a new language of curial gestures and behavior. The female sovereign was supposed to be the sun at the center of her court, surrounded by her ladies-in-waiting and served by a large group of qualified staff.

The Queen's Apartments

The queen's 'honor' first came across through the quality of her apartments. At the time, there were no castles specifically devoted to the female sovereign, even though she sometimes favored a given residence. Isabeau of Bavaria thus stayed at the Hôtel Barbette in Paris on numerous occasions after purchasing it from John of Montaigu and having it renovated.[4] Female sovereigns therefore lived in a variety of royal residences across the 'garden of France', which were situated primarily in Paris and the Île-de-France region during the fourteenth century (the Louvre, the Hôtel Saint-Pol and the Castle of Vincennes) and in the Loire Valley (Tours, Amboise and Blois) during the following century. They went there either accompanied by their husbands or according to their own travel itinerary.[5]

Inside these palaces, they—like the king—had three spaces available to them, each with a distinct purpose: a parament room, a retiring room and a sacred space, such as an oratory or private chapel.[6] The parament room was a ceremonial room linked to their roles of representation, a room hung with rich tapestries and furnished with one or a number of beds. The retiring room was semi-official in nature and preceded the most intimate rooms such as the bedchamber itself and the adjoining wardrobe. The queen's chamber, like that of her husband, was guarded by ushers and sergeants-at-arms who were obligated to 'lie' at the foot of the royal bed or stand in front of the door. In these rooms, she went about her daily activities, slept, and also ate, since the table was literally 'dressed' each day in either the ceremonial room or more frequently the retiring room, depending on the circumstances.

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[2] Gaude-Ferragu, Paviot and Laurioux, 'Introduction', in *La cour du prince*, 7; Werner Paravicini, Torsten Hiltmann and Frank Viltart, eds., *La Cour de Bourgogne et l'Europe. Le rayonnement et les limites d'un modèle culturel* (Ostfildern: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2013), 13.

[3] Caroline zum Kolk, 'The Household of the Queen of France in the Sixteenth Century', *The Court Historian* 14, no. 1 (2009): 4.

[4] Marie-Véronique Clin, *Isabeau de Bavière* (Paris: Perrin, 1999), 133.

[5] Yann Grandeau, 'Itinéraire d'Isabeau de Bavière', *Bulletin philologique et historique des travaux historiques et scientifiques* (1964): 569–670.

[6] Contamine, 'Espaces féminins', 79–90; Fernand Bournon, 'L'hôtel royal de Saint-Pol à Paris', *Mémoires de la Société de l'histoire de Paris et de l'Île-de-France* 6 (1879): 54–179; and Boris Bove, 'À la recherche des hôtels princiers de Paris : l'inventaire impossible ?' in *La cour du prince*, 177–92.

To these personal spaces should be added the service buildings. At Vincennes, the queen thus had her own kitchen, in which her meals and those of the court were prepared.[7] The royal castles were also equipped with all the modern comforts, including latrines (which had long been commonly used) and 'bath chambers' (which had appeared more recently). These were generally simple rooms fitted with 'bathtubs', or wooden vessels filled with hot water—although certain palaces, like the Popes' Palace in Avignon, were equipped with hypocaust steamrooms.[8]

The queen's apartments were thus always distinct from those of the king. Their layout, though more restrained because a study or a library were not usually included, was largely similar. At the Palais de la Cité, the king resided on the first floor and the queen on the ground floor, but the rooms were laid out in the same way. At the fortress of the Louvre (refurbished by Charles V), the famous *Grande Vis* staircase led directly to the king's parament room on the second floor as well as to his wife's room on the first floor.[9] At the Hôtel Saint-Pol, the queen had her own *corps de logis*, situated at the end of the palace near the Church of Saint-Pol.[10]

The king's travels in the Val de Loire did not modify the overall layout of the rooms. At Amboise and Blois, however, paired dwellings came to double the traditional apartments.[11] They included a parament room shared by both dwellings (that of the king and that of the queen) and providing access to the royal chambers. The new residence at Blois, a magnificent brick wing of the castle that has been preserved, was notably used to house Archduke Philip the Fair and his wife in December 1501.[12] Anne of Brittany's body was also displayed there when she died in 1514.

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[7] Jean Chapelot, *Le château de Vincennes, une résidence royale au Moyen Âge* (Paris: CNRS, 1994).

[8] Jean Mesqui, 'Les ensembles palatiaux et princiers en France aux XIV^{e} et XV^{e} siècles', in *Palais royaux et princiers au Moyen Âge*, ed. Annie Renoux (Le Mans: Publications de l'Université du Maine, 1996), 60.

[9] Mary Whiteley, 'Royal and Ducal Palaces in France in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries: Interior, Ceremony and Functions', in *Architecture et vie sociale. L'organisation intérieure des grandes demeures à la fin du Moyen Âge et à la Renaissance*, ed. Jean Guillaume (Paris: Picard, 1994), 49–50.

[10] Bournon, 'L'hôtel royal de Saint-Pol', 54–179.

[11] Monique Chatenet, 'Les logis des femmes à la cour des derniers Valois', in *Das Frauenzimmer. Die Frau bei Hofe in Spätmittelalter und früher Neuzeit* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 2000), 186.

THE 'COURT OF LADIES': THE QUEEN'S *HÔTEL*

The Ladies-in-Waiting

According to Brantôme, the 'court of Ladies' was created under the reign of Anne of Brittany.[13] His words were confirmed by the following figures: under Anne, the female court climbed from 23 ladies-in-waiting in 1490 to 39 women five years later. The court of ladies subsequently did not cease to expand, with 98 ladies-in-waiting serving Louise of Lorraine.[14]

While this court grew during the sixteenth century, it was not new. A 1261 order relating to the *hôtel* of Louis IX's wife Margaret of Provence specified that six 'ladies'—probably her ladies-in-waiting—were supposed to receive parament gowns.[15] Joan of Navarre had five ladies-in-waiting, Joan of Évreux 18 ladies-in-waiting and Isabeau of Bavaria a dozen. Seventeen women served Marie of Anjou in 1452.[16]

They played a crucial role both within the queen's *hôtel*—their number and quality contributing to her prestige—and within courtly society, which they embellished with their presence. They were all chosen from among the members of the nobility, being the wives and widows of great lords, serving the crown (which it was especially important to honor) or women from the female sovereign's native region whom she had brought with her. Isabeau of Bavaria was accompanied by noblewomen from Bavaria such as Catherine 'the German' (remarried to the Lord of Hainceville and the famous protagonist of the Bal des Ardents, or Ball of the Burning Men) and the wives and widows of the great lords who were either close to the king or part of her *hôtel*.[17] In 1387, Charles VI thus named Isabella of Melun, Countess of Eu and John of Artois's widow, as head of the 'dames, ladies and other women being in the company of [my] very dear and very loved companion the queen'.[18] Joan of Artois, her daughter and widow of Simon of Thouars (Count of Dreux), was second in rank after her. Among the other ladies-in-waiting were Marie de Duisy, who was married to Philip de Savoisy (the queen's *maître d'hôtel*), and Isabeau, the wife of Gaucher de Châtillon (Constable of France).

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[12] Monique Chatenet and Pierre-Gilles Girault, *Fastes de cour. Les enjeux d'un voyage princier à Blois en 1501* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2010).

[13] Pierre de Bourdeille, abbé de Brantôme, *Recueil des Dames, poésies et tombeaux*, ed. Etienne Vaucheret (Paris: La Pléiade, 1991), 13.

[14] Caroline Zum Kolk, 'Les femmes à la cour de France au XVI^{e} siècle. La fonction politique de la Maison de Catherine de Médicis (1533-1574)', in *Femmes de pouvoir et pouvoir des femmes*, eds. Armel Nayt-Dubois and Emmanuelle Santinelli-Foltz, 239–56.

[15] Alexis-Noël Diagne, 'L'Hôtel de la reine de France à la fin du Moyen Âge (1261-1422)' (PhD diss., Université Paris-IV-Sorbonne, 1984), 29–36.

[16] Zum Kolk, 'The Household', 8.

The Hôtel's *Officers*

The officers of the *hôtel*, who along with the ladies-in-waiting made up the queen's court, handled either her administrative affairs and finances or her 'private affairs', meaning that they served her on a daily basis. Logically, there were less of them than in the king's *hôtel* (in 1316, Philip V's *hôtel* counted 164 members and that of Joan of Burgundy 102), since the king's and the queen's needs were far from identical. The queen's household was more focused on domestic service and did not include certain specialized roles, such as the chamberlains and the officers of the *écurie*.[19]

The reginal *hôtel* was nonetheless quite developed, second only to the king's when it came to size and being much larger than that of the dauphin. There were 212 officers in Joan of Évreux's *hôtel* (1326).[20] The level of staff that had been attained remained stable under the reign of Isabeau of Bavaria[21] but subsequently changed direction under Charlotte of Savoy (150 people being cited upon her death in 1483[22]). The number of staff did not increase again until the end of the fifteenth century, when Anne of Brittany surrounded herself with 253 servants in 1498.[23] The progression in staffing numbers of the *hôtel* was not linear. Its great increase at the end of the fifteenth century can be explained by different factors, such as the Italian Renaissance's more developed influence on the 'court of ladies' and the importance the queen had gained by being more closely associated with royal dignity. The grandeur of her household contributed to the representation of power. Another factor was the role of the *hôtel* in the system of patronage, used to reward 'clients of the crown'.[24]

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[17] Yann Grandeau, 'De quelques dames qui ont servi la reine Isabeau de Bavière', *Bulletin philologique et historique du Comité des travaux historiques et scientifiques* (Paris, 1977), 809–49.

[18] 'Dames, damoiselles et autres femmes estans en la compagnie de très chère et très amer compaigne la royne.' Diagne, *L'Hôtel de la reine*, 33.

[19] Zum Kolk, 'The Household', 7.

[20] Ibid., 10.

[21] Diagne, *L'Hôtel de la reine*, 128.

[22] Alexandre Tuetey, 'Inventaire des biens de Charlotte de Savoie', *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* 26 (1865): 338–44.

[23] Zum Kolk, 'Les femmes à la cour', 239.

Among the staff entrusted with administrative affairs, the most important officer was the chancellor who followed the queen on her travels. He was accompanied by a wax-heater, who was indispensable for the sealing of acts, and a certain number of notaries/secretaries (usually two) who wrote the acts.

In the area of finances, two officers played a dominant role: the master of the Chamber of Deniers and the *argentier*. Indeed, like her husband, the queen had two types of customary expenses. Some were tied to the running of her *hôtel* (primarily the servants' salaries) and were managed by the master of the Chamber of Deniers,[25] while the others pertained to her personal spending on fabrics, furs, jewels, items of orfevrerie and books, which were handled by the *argentier*. For a long time, funds were shared by the king, the queen and their children. Then, beginning in 1393 (a year after the king's first bout of madness), it was deemed necessary to increase Isabeau of Bavaria's own revenue, which would be used to care for her (and her children) and which she could manage autonomously. She was allotted 10,000 francs for silver goods.

Six main offices were in charge of serving the queen on a daily basis, primarily related to food (*paneterie*, *échansonnerie*, *cuisine* and *fruiterie*) or working during royal travels (*fourrière* and *écurie*). They were managed by the maîtres d'hôtel, of which there were four under Joan of Évreux in 1326 and six under Isabeau in 1397.[26] During this time, the most important person was the *grand maître d'hôtel*, whose role was to organize how things were run and to receive the oaths taken when officers were nominated.

The *paneterie* handled the supply of bread as well all table- and linen-related services. The *échansonnerie* was tasked with the transportation and storage of wines. The kitchen was composed of a large specialized work-force, including kitchen esquires, cooks (*queux*), potagers and *sauciers.* The *fruiterie* was entrusted with purchasing dried fruits, nuts and the wax needed for lighting the palace on a daily basis. The *fourrière* was in charge of preparing and supplying the queen's lodgings during her travels. The *écurie* took care of looking after her horses and her messenger service. It was composed of equerries and grooms in addition to messengers employed to relay news and the queen's correspondence.

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[24] Zum Kolk, 'The Household', 12–13.

[25] Maurice Rey, *Les finances royales sous Charles VI*; Rachel C. Gibbons, 'The Queen as "Social Mannequin": Consumerism and Expenditure at the Court of Isabeau of Bavaria, 1393-1422', *Journal of Medieval History* 26: 371–95.

[26] Diagne, *L'Hôtel de la reine*, 62.

Various services were linked to these six main offices by extension. They were related to the chapel (confessors, almoners, cantors, chaplains and chapel clerics) and the chamber, which was composed of esquires, sommeliers, valets and chambermaids in addition to doctors and staff linked to courtly life (tailors, cobblers, goldsmiths and silversmiths, painters, upholsterers and librarians). Thus, Charlotte of Savoy had a tailor, a cobbler, a goldsmith, an upholsterer and a librarian (Martin Luillier) in 1483. A doctor, Jean de Milet, took care of her day-to-day health and was occasionally assisted by more staff.[27] The queen's doctors were sometimes great intellectuals. In 1335, for example, Joan of Burgundy took as her physician Guy de Vigevano (previously Emperor Henry VIII's doctor), who had written a treatise on the crusade for Philip VI entitled *Thesaurus regis Franciae acquisitionis Terrae Sanctae.*[28]

Mary of Anjou's *hôtel* was also the setting in which an official astrologist first made an appearance, according to the account books (1450). Indeed, Arnoul de La Palu was regularly paid as such and not as a doctor (Mary of Anjou being passionate about astrology).[29] Arnoul, who was eventually named King Charles VII's astrologer, was quickly replaced in the reginal *hôtel* by a knight known as 'Jehan de Lormont'.

The boundaries between the two households were indeed fluid and the exchange of servants frequent. Many careers thus began in the queen's *hôtel.* Enguerrand de Marigny, who ended his life on the gallows of Montfaucon, was Joan of Navarre's *panetier* before serving Philip IV the Fair. Inversely, Philip de Savoisy first served the king (as Charles V's chamberlain and captain of the Castle of Melun, then Charles VI's chamberlain) before being promoted to Isabeau's *hôtel*, which he was entrusted with managing in 1385, a position he held until his death in 1398.[30]

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[27] Ernest Wickersheimer, *Dictionnaire biographique des médecins en France au Moyen Âge* (Geneva: Droz, 1979), 451.

[28] Franck Collard, *Le crime de poison au Moyen Âge* (Paris: PUF, 2003), 133–34.

[29] Jean-Patrice Boudet, Emmanuel Poulle, 'Les jugements astrologiques sur la naissance de Charles VII', in *Guerre, pouvoir et noblesse au Moyen Âge : mélanges en l'honneur de Philippe Contamine,* eds. Jacques Paviot and Jacques Verger (Paris: Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 2000), 194.

The king alone chose certain servants for his wife's *hôtel*, notably the most esteemed among them, men whom he appreciated for their capabilities or whom he wanted to reward. But the queen also contributed to the system of patronage for certain offices, her household making it possible to reward services and build patronage.[31] She would first recruit people from her native region who had followed her when she married or whom she had summoned based on the recommendations of close friends or relatives. Joan of Burgundy, Philip V's wife and heiress to the county of Burgundy, had a number of servants from the Franche-Comté region among her domestic staff. Their geographical roots were revealed in their names, which included Jean de Poligny and Oudet de Gray (both servants in the *écurie*), Simon de Gray (her daughters' chaplain), Henri de Besançon and Pierre de Salins.[32]

Nevertheless, there were few regional officers. Joan of Évreux does not seem to have had any specific preference for staff from the counties of Évreux and Brie.[33] German servants were also relatively rare in Isabeau of Bavaria's *hôtel*.[34] At the end of the fifteenth century, the same observation prevails for the *hôtel* of Margaret of Austria, Charles VIII's young fiancée, who 'only brought with her the wife of the Veau de Bousanton, who was her wet nurse, the Veau and his brother, with few people from our nation'.[35]

The loyalty of these officers was often exemplary. From one testament or order to the next, the same names reappear. Under Isabeau of Bavaria, the length of actual service often lasted more than a quarter of a century. Andriet Lemaire, guardian of tapestries and the queen's chambers who had been in service since 1385, was still mentioned in the final years of her reign as head of renovation in the royal residences.[36] Service sometimes extended from one queen to the next. Madame de Bussières, who was cited as a lady-in-waiting in Charlotte of Savoy's *hôtel*, entered into the service of Margaret of Austria when Charlotte died, before becoming the Dauphin Charles-Orland's governess.[37]

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[30] Diagne, *L'Hôtel de la reine*, 72.

[31] Zum Kolk, 'Les femmes à la cour de France', 246.

[32] Paris, AN, J 404 A n° 23.

[33] Anne-Hélène Allirot, 'L'entourage et l'Hôtel de Jeanne d'Évreux, reine de France (1324-1371)', *Annales de Bretagne et des pays de l'Ouest*116, no. 1 (2009): 169-81.

[34] Diagne, *L'Hôtel de la reine*, 129.

[35] 'N'amena avecques elle que la femme du Veau de Bousanton, qui estoit sa norrice, ledit Veau et son frère, avecques peu de gens de nostre nacion.' Olivier de La Marche in Trombert, 'Une reine de quatre ans', 128.

[36] Diagne, *L'Hôtel de la reine*, 127.

Courtly Life

The queen's day was strictly regulated. As the exemplary mirror of all virtues, she was supposed to avoid the traps of courtly life, particularly the sin of pride (which was the pitfall of the powerful). In the *Speculum dominarum* destined for Joan of Navarre (1297), Durand de Champagne inscribed virtue as being at the very heart of reginal dignity. Through her exemplary behavior, the queen was the sun inundating the court and all of her subjects with light.[38] Authors of *miroirs* thus took great care to instill in her the paths to perfection. The daily quest for excellency was part of the 'profession of queen'.

Above all, laziness was the mother of all vices. Female sovereigns were thus supposed to occupy their days with all kinds of work. Other than the pious and charitable works to which they dedicated an important amount of time (prayers, alms, hospital visits and so on), they were supposed to devote themselves to their needlework (sewing and weaving) and reading holy books. Marie of Anjou's account books for silver goods (for the years 1454 and 1455) attest to the fact that the queen embroidered on a daily basis using golden threads from Cypress, Venice and Genoa, a cushion stuffed with bulrush and canvas patterns from Cambrai.[39]

The female sovereign was also supposed to know how to behave around her court. The *miroirs* thus completed her training with social and worldly education. Clothing was notably the center of their attention. While it indeed had to reflect the princess's rank,[40] it was not supposed to be excessive in order to avoid the sins of pride and lust. The lengths of trains, the necklines of dresses and the heights of hairdos were the elements most frequently criticized by moralists.

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[37] Florence Trombert, 'Une reine de quatre ans à la cour de France : Marguerite d'Autriche, 1484-1485', in *Autour de Marguerite d'Écosse. Reines, princesses et dames du XV siècle,* eds. Geneviève and Philippe Contamine (Paris: Champion, 1999), 123–61.

[38] Paris, BnF, Fr. 610, fol. 36–36 v°; Lequain Elodie, 'L'éducation des femmes de la noblesse en France au Moyen Age (XIII -XV siècle)' (PhD diss., Paris-Ouest Nanterre-La Défense, 2005), 370.

[39] Bernard Chevalier, 'Marie d'Anjou, une reine sans gloire, 1404-1463', in *Autour de Marguerite d'Écosse. Reines, princesses et dames du XVe siècle,* eds. Geneviève and Philippe Contamine (Paris: Champion, 1999), 81–99.

[40] Lequain Elodie, 'L'éducation des femmes de la noblesse en France au Moyen Age (*XIIIe -XVe* siècle)' (PhD diss., Paris-Ouest Nanterre-La Défense, 2005), 463.

Despite these recommendations, the queen not only took great care when it came to the richness of her wardrobe, but also followed—and even started—the latest curial fashions, even the most extravagant. While Isabeau of Bavaria's taste for finery did not surpass that displayed by the king and the princes in his entourage, her account books abound with purchases of clothing and jewels, 'gowns, cloaks, corsets, surcoats, coats and chaperons' made of golden fabrics, silk, velvet and sometimes marten, fine vair and ermine fur.[41] Her jewels were gold or gilded silver encrusted with precious stones, diamonds and pearls. Her purchases attest to the fashions of the time, as did her unique hairdos, such as the one comprised of horns and folds that is visible on the frontispiece of Christine de Pizan's *Collected Works.*

Ceremonial clothing was sometimes embroidered with a personal motto. Indeed, like their husbands, queens and princesses had adopted this new means of representation.[42] Emblematic language was composed of figurative signs that were frequently accompanied by a phrase or a word. The figures were animals or plants, such as those retained by Isabeau of Bavaria (swallows and *mouron*, or pimpernel). As signs of identity, mottoes were part of courtly fashion and also communicated a new need for 'self-expression'. This allowed the queen to 'enter into representation' using her own signs, which were distinct from her husband's and her father's emblems. Still, some queens did not greatly depart from emblems that had previously been employed, such as Marie of Anjou who adopted the winged stag, which had been the figure of kings since Charles VI, and Anne of Brittany who appropriated the familial emblem of the cord in 1488, using it as a political tool for perpetuating her father's memory. The cord, which had been abandoned under the reign of Charles VIII, was adopted by Anne during her second marriage, recalling her official status as Duchess of Brittany.

Curial training was also supposed to teach the princess etiquette and urban manners, such as knowing how to sing, dance, play chess, and so on.[43] In her *Teachings*, Anne of Beaujeau, Duchess of Bourbon, thus gave her daughter Suzanne precious advice about propriety. One should not mock anyone and should survey one's manners: 'Always carry yourself honorably, in a cold and assured manner, with a humble look, speaking in a low, constant and firm way.'[44]

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[41] Paris, AN, KK 41, fol. 11–11 v°; Elisabeth Taburet-Delahaye, 'Parures et bijoux de la reine Isabeau de Bavière', *Bulletin de la Société nationale des Antiquaires de France* (2008): 242–69.

[42] Laurent Hablot, 'Les princesses et la devise. L'utilisation politique des devises et des ordres de chevalerie par les femmes de pouvoir à la fin du Moyen Âge', in *Femmes de pouvoir et pouvoir des femmes*, 163–76.

[43] Lequain, *L'éducation des femmes de la noblesse*, 511.

These recommendations were even more important since, as early as the second half of the fourteenth century, the French court began to witness the development of specific etiquette and protocol, as Éléonore de Poitiers's treaty entitled *Les honneurs de la cour* (1484-1487) attests for the following century.[45] It formalized all of the rules governing courtly life by formulating them based on royal use.[46] Éléonore was interested in all the major 'rites of passage', such as baptism, child-rearing, marriage and death. The rules surrounding female mourning were therefore strictly codified, with women having to remain shut away in a chamber of their palace completely draped with black sheets. They remained reclined on the bed for a length of time that varied according to their rank and degree of relation to the deceased. When their parents died, the 'banneresses' (wives of bannerets) were only supposed to rest on a bed for nine days.[47] Taking her rank into account, the queen had the longest period of reclusion. When her husband died, she was supposed to remain in a chamber draped with black sheets for one year. This was, however, a public ritual of mourning during which she remained reclining during official visits (especially when people came to present their condolences) and was able to go about her usual business the rest of the time.

On the whole, the treatise attests to the progressive distancing of the queen's body, which was only greeted according to a strict protocol. Kneeling, which was a sign of humility and reverence, was supposed to be extensive and repeated.[48] Thus, etiquette was born, with a complicated choreography put into place during important ceremonies. The order to be followed during meals and every movement had to be mastered and the distinctions between ranks respected.[49]

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[44] *Les enseignements d'Anne de France, duchesse de Bourbonnais et d'Auvergne, à sa fille Susanne de Bourbon*, ed. Martial-Alphonse Chazaud (Moulins: C. Desroziers, 1878), 67–69; Sharon L. Jansen, *Anne of France: Lessons for My Daughter* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2004).

[45] Jacques Paviot, 'Éléonore de Poitiers. Les États de France (Les honneurs de la cour)', in *Annuaire-Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de France* (Paris: Renouard, 1998), 75–118.

[46] Paviot, 'Les honneurs de la cour d'Éléonore de Poitiers', in *Autour de Marguerite d'Écosse. Reines, princesses et dames du XV^{e} siècle,* eds. Geneviève and Philippe Contamine (Paris: Champion, 1999), 164–71.

[47] Paviot, 'Éléonore de Poitiers', 113–14.

[48] Jacques Paviot, 'Les marques de distance dans les *Honneurs de la Cour* d'Aliénor de Poitiers', in *Zeremoniell und Raum*, ed. Werner Paravicini (Sigmaringen: J. Thorbecke, 1997), 91–96.

Courtly life, although codified, was no less enlivened by many pastimes. Christine de Pizan described them without lingering too much on details in the following extract:

> Yet other pleasures delight ladies, such as hunting, boating on the river, dancing (if they are young), and certain games. I do not prescribe or teach these, preferring to leave them to the discretion and wish of the ladies themselves and their husbands. Such sports and entertainments can be allowed without hesitation to even the most virtuous ladies when time and place are suitable, disporting themselves with moderation, always avoiding excess.[50]

Hunting, while indeed a hobby, was also part of the role of representation that queens and noble ladies had to perform within the court. Falconry was also recommended to them, while some also practiced stag-hunting, despite the inherent danger of this activity.

Surrounded by her ladies-in-waiting, the female sovereign also played table games such as cards and chess, as the account books for silver goods demonstrate. In 1394, Isabeau of Bavaria thus had sculpted a king, a queen, a 'fol' (bishop) and a knight 'mounted on an ivory horse' for a chess game that she had assembled.[51] The account books also show that, for her enjoyment, she kept a parrot, various birds and a greyhound named Lancelot (to whom she offered a gilded silver collar in 1393). The latter served as a companion to Charles VI's greyhound, who had the equally knightly name of Roland.[52] Other more exotic animals, such as a monkey and a leopard, also inhabited her menagerie.[53]

Mary of Anjou kept starlings and parrots, a wild goat, stags and does in addition to greyhounds. She was also sent a porpoise.[54] The account books for silver goods dated 1454-1455 abound with details regarding her pastimes and tastes.[55] She had spent her childhood between Anjou and Provence with her parents Louis II and Yolanda of Aragon and her brothers René and Charles of Maine. She remained very attached to them. The New Year's gifts she offered on 1 January 1455 were all—except for her ritual offerings to the king and the people in her household—destined for her brothers and her sister-in-law Joan of Laval. She frequently received René of Anjou at her home and borrowed his boats to go up the Vienne and Loire Rivers to Tours. When she fell gravely ill in Mehun between January and March 1455, she immediately had her doctor summoned and recovered in the Provençal sanctuaries of her childhood, devoting herself to the Sanctuary of Saintes-Maries de la Mer and keeping a bottle of oil that contact with the local relics had made miraculous. The account books reveal that she had not forgotten the flavors of Provence. For Lent in 1455, she had olive, cumin, anchovies, Marseille figs, Perpignan grapes, tuna and capers brought from Montpellier to Mehun at great expense.

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[49] Zum Kolk, 'Les femmes à la cour de France', 249; Fanny Cosandey, 'Les préséances à la cour des reines de France', in *Femmes et pouvoir politique*, eds. Isabelle Poutrin and Marie-Karine Schaub, in *Femmes et pouvoir politique. Les princesses d'Europe, XV -XVIII siècle,* eds. Isabelle Poutrin and Marie-Karine Schaub (Paris: Bréal, 2007). 267–78.

[50] *A Medieval Woman's Mirror of Honor: The Treasury of the City of Ladies, Christine de Pizan*, ed. Charity Cannon Willard (New York: Persea Books, 1989), 97.

[51] Paris, AN, KK 41, fol. 85 v°.

[52] Paris, AN, KK 41, fol. 25.

[53] Paris, AN, KK 49, fol. 48 v° (1416-1417).

[54] Chevalier, 'Marie d'Anjou', 95.

The queen also participated in and enlivened the many courtly festivals, which were celebrated during baptisms, marriages, diplomatic visits and tournaments. In both reality and the chronicles, the court was a place of honor and wonder.[56] People feasted upon refined and copious meals.[57] The festivals held at the Abbey of Saint-Denis in May 1389 were particularly memorable. The whole court was gathered together, including Charles VI and Isabeau, the princes of the blood (such as the king's brother Louis of Touraine and his uncle Louis II of Bourbon), princesses and high-ranking ladies in addition to royal officers. The curial spectacle unfolded in three acts. The first day was devoted to the knighting of the Princes of Anjou, Louis and Charles, the second to tournaments and jousts and the last to the celebration of the requiem mass in honor of Bertrand du Guesclin, the model constable who was responsible for reconquering the regions that had been lost during the Hundred Years War.[58]

Balls, sometimes costumed or masked, enriched the festival. The famous Bal des Ardents, or Ball of the Burning Men (January 1393), provides a dramatic example. The ball, which was organized during the remarriage of the queen's lady-in-waiting Catherine de Villers, quickly ended in tragedy. The wedding was a grandiose affair. The entire court was present, and the day was pleasantly spent in revelry and banqueting. Then came the evening of the ball. Trumpets, flutes and tambourines began to play, and the dancing commenced. Suddenly, there appeared six beastly men, hairy as apes. Their faces were disguised by masks, and they were dressed in skintight costumes covered in oakum. They arrived tied to each other in single file, howling like wolves and making obscene gestures. It was Charles VI and his companions, who were enacting a masquerade banned by the church known as a charivari. In fact, the bride was already twice a widow. At the time, the custom in such circumstances was to poke fun at the mismatched new couple. The dramatic moment occurred when, in order to recognize one of the participants, Louis of Orleans approached one of the masked figures with a torch. The dancers' flammable clothing caught fire, the flames instantly spreading from one man to the other. Of the six, only two survived, one of whom was the king. He had been saved by the Duchess of Berry, who put out the fire by covering him with her long train.

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[55] Ibid., 95–97.

[56] Guido Castelnuovo, 'La cour et ses mises en scènes dans les chroniques savoyardes du XV^{e} siècle', in *La cour du prince*, eds. Murielle Gaude-Ferragu, Bruno Laurioux and Jacques Paviot, 469–82.

[57] Bruno Laurioux, 'Le festin d'Assuérus : femmes – et hommes – à table vers la fin du Moyen Âge', *Clio. Histoire, femmes et sociétés* 14 (2001): 47–70.

[58] Marius Barroux, *Les fêtes royales de Saint-Denis en mai 1389* (Paris: les Amis de Saint-Denys, 1936.

When speaking of the court in France, one reference naturally stands out: that of Louis XIV, who conceived a genuine political, artistic, cultural and social system attested to by the architectural splendor, decor and gardens of the Castle of Versailles, the jewel of the French patrimony.[59] And yet courtly society did not suddenly emerge under the Sun King's reign. It was the fruit of a centuries-old heritage dating back to at least the thirteenth century for the structuring of the *hôtel* and the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries for the institution of a plethoric body contributing to the representation of power. Yet the queen's role within the monarchy was in part linked to how it functioned. The splendors of life at court marked the reigns of ceremonial kings like Charles V and Charles VI, who naturally flaunted their wives during important public ceremonies (such as coronations, Isabeau's entry and Joan of Bourbon's funeral) as an extension of their sovereign body. During the fifteenth century, however, Charles VII and Louis XI had more modest courts, due either to a lack of resources (as was the case of Charles VII at the beginning of his reign), temperament or a desire to depart from Burgundian exuberence.[60] The female sovereigns Marie of Anjou and Charlotte of Savoy subsequently remained in the shadow of power, or at least in the shadow of historiography. In order to dazzle in monarchical life and the chronicles, the queen needed a lavish and ceremonial court. Anne of Brittany, however, did not only shine during her coronation and her entry. She was also an important patron of religious, artistic and literary domains, once again contributing to the representation of power.

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[59] Philippe Contamine, 'Préface', in *La cour du prince*, eds. Murielle Gaude-Ferragu, Bruno Laurioux and Jacques Paviot, 7.

[60] Ibid., 7–8.

Chapter 8: The Road to Eternity: Devotions and the Divine

Like the Queen of Heaven, the female sovereign was supposed to unfurl her large protective cloak over her kingdom's subjects, offering a form of protection that was not only linked to her power to intercede. Indeed, alongside 'the very Christian king' whom she complemented, she embodied the virtue of charity, which was not only a theological virtue but also a political duty since it contributed to establishing the common good.[1]

Beyond the expected spiritual benefits on the steep road leading to eternity, religious patronage was one of the preferred means by which queens expressed their power. Foundations and offerings formed both their identity and their prestige, allowing them to transcend their own devotions and celebrate a particular memory, which was often a hybrid one associating bonds of blood and alliance. Wives in particular made themselves intercessors in the salvation of their husbands' and relatives' souls through their prayers and the foundation of masses. This memorial role seems to have been linked to their specific vocation to act as the privileged intermediaries of the sacred, which had been well established since the Early Middle Ages.[2] As the links between two families and two territo-

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[1] Priscille Aladjidi, *Le roi père des pauvres France, XIII^e-XV^e siècle*(Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2008).

[2] Emmanuelle Santinelli, *Des femmes éplorées? Les veuves dans la société aristocratique du haut Moyen Âge* (Villeneuve-d'Ascq: Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 2003); Patrick Corbet, *Les saints ottoniens. Sainteté dynastique, sainteté royale et sainteté féminine* (Sigmaringen: J. Thorbecke, 1986); Régine Le Jan, 'Monastères de femmes, violence et compétition pour le pouvoir dans la Francie du VII^e s.', in *Femmes, pouvoir et société dans le*

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rial spaces, queens contributed to spreading and promoting new cults, at once universal, dynastic and territorial. The fourteenth-century princesses descending from Saint Louis's 'good blood' in particular had played a key role in developing the cult and memory of the Holy King.[3]

The Mirror of Christian Perfection

As the mirror of perfection for her subjects, the female sovereign served an exemplary role that required her to reach the highest degree of Christian excellence. Prayers, contemplation and the practice of merciful acts were among the daily manifestations of her faith, one that was meant to be personal and focused on developing inwardness.[4]

The queen murmured her prayers on a daily basis in her palatial chapel or her oratory. This recitation was repeated numerous times throughout the day, theoretically at each monastic hour. The account books reveal that Isabeau of Bavaria said her hours by candlelight every morning in her bedchamber.[5] Books of hours were indispensable companions when it came to praying. Opening with a calendar presenting work in the fields and the signs of the zodiac, they generally contained the Hours of the Virgin, penitential psalms and the Litanies of the Saints. The prayers, which were addressed to the Virgin and the saints, made it possible to meditate on the life of Christ. The *Great Hours* of Anne of Brittany (1505–1508), painted by Jean Bourdichon, included a magnificent cycle of 27 figures of saints as well as a calendar decorated with historiated margins.[6] The Annunciation to the Shepherds is exceptional. In it, the kneeling men's faces and arms are bathed in the golden light of 'the Lord's glory' as the campfire projects red light on their lower bodies.[7]

In their libraries, queens also possessed treatises on devotion and spirituality, such as Jean Gerson's *The Mountain of Contemplation*, which were meant for laypeople and were adapted for private, meditative prayer.

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haut Moyen Âge (Paris: Picard, 2001), 89–107; and Geneviève Bührer-Thierry, 'Femmes et patrimoines dans le haut Moyen Âge occidental, Nouvelles approches', in *Hypothèses 2004, Travaux de l'école doctorale de l'université Paris-I Sorbonne*, 323–33.

[3] Anne-Hélène Allirot, *Filles de roy de France. Princesses royales, mémoire de saint Louis et conscience dynastique (de 1270 à la fin du XIV^e^ siècle)*(Turnhout: Brepols, 2010).

[4] Catherine Vincent, *Église et société en Occident, XIII^e^-XV^e^ siècle* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2009), 165.

[5] Lequain, *L'éducation des femmes*, 379.

[6] Paris, BnF, Latin 9474; *France 1500*, 136–37.

[7] Ibid., fol. 58 v°.

Charlotte of Savoy held a large collection of such works,[8] which urged readers to indulge in introspective exercises allowing them to access the 'knowledge of God' through 'the knowledge of oneself'.[9]

The female sovereign attended mass on a daily basis. She had her own chapel staff on hand, the number of which increased during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[10] In 1388, Isabeau of Bavaria's chapel was composed of eight persons: six chaplains (including the almoner) and two clerics or sommeliers.[11] It was not a musical chapel in the strict sense of the word, meaning it did not have professional cantors who specialized in the complex polyphonic music known as *ars nova* that appeared in the early fourteenth century. Thus, Solemn High Mass (sung mass as opposed to Low Mass) was often celebrated by other clerics, such as the Cordeliers, who were paid to come to sing mass every morning for a few weeks at the Church of Saint-Pol when the queen resided in the neighboring palace. During this time, Isabeau would remain in her oratory, which was composed of a wooden frame hung with rich paraments and could be dismantled.[12]

A real cantors' chapel seems to have been organized in the early fifteenth century, some of the members of which became famous. Toussaint de la Ruelle, who entered the queen's service in 1416, was one of them, enjoying a brilliant career within her pontifical chapel before joining that of Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy. As for Marie of Anjou, she possessed a chapel composed of some 15 members. It was a musical chapel in which two chaplains, Pierre Basin and Jean Sohier (known as 'Fede'), indulged in efforts to compose polyphonic music.[13]

A confessor officiated within this chapel, as attested to in the sovereign's *hôtel* as early as the reign of Louis IX (according to the papal bull of 1243). The queen obtained from the pope the right to choose her own confessor shortly after, in around 1255.[14] From Saint Louis to Charles VI, every royal confessor came from one of the mendicant orders, which were equally represented, the confessor being Dominican for the sovereign and Franciscan for his wife. There were nonetheless a few exceptions. Jacques de Corvo and Jean Taurin, the confessors of Clementia of Hungary and Marie of Luxembourg, were Friar Preachers.[15] In 1389, the Dominicans were replaced in this position by theologians from the University of Paris. Queens were able to keep mendicant confessors, among them the Franciscan Guillaume de Vaulx, who was Marie of Anjou's confessor before 1454.[16] The chapel also included an almoner, who fitted the queen's charitable role.

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[8] Anne-Marie Legaré, 'Charlotte de Savoie's Library and Illuminator's', *Journal of the Early Book Society for the Study of Manuscripts and Printing History* 4 (2001): 41–63.

[9] Vincent, *Église et société*, 166.

[10] Xavier de la Selle, *Le service des âmes à la cour : confesseurs et aumôniers des rois de France du XIII*ᵉ *au XV*ᵉ *siècle* (Paris: École des chartes, 1995), 71–73.

[11] Paris, AN, KK 19, fol. 129 v° (1388).

[12] Paris, AN, KK 41, fol. 167 v°; Paris, AN, KK 42, fol. 45 v°.

[13] Leeman L. Perkins, 'Musical Patronage at the Royal Court of France Under Charles VII and Louis XI (1422-83)', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 37 (1984): 529.

[14] De la Selle, *Le service des âmes à la cour*, 40.

The Queen as 'Mother of the Poor'

The apostolic and evangelical ideal did not only exalt the voluntary poverty of monks, but also the involuntary poverty that was endured and which had provoked a veritable 'wave of charity' in the Medieval West since the twelfth century.[17] Any person who was deeply in need was considered to be in Christ's image, as Christ had set the example for acknowledgment of the weak and had made himself poor. At the end of time, the people who would be admitted to heaven were those who gave food, drink and clothing to the needy, visited prisoners and the sick, and welcomed strangers, for it was Christ that they had helped (Matthew 25:31–46). These acts of benevolence were therefore all the more attractive, since the pauper became the instrument of salvation for the person who helped him or her.

Inasmuch as the sovereign was supposed to behave in Christ's image and as a model for his people, it was necessary to perform the Christian virtue of charity perfectly.[18] This was also a political duty that was an integral part of exerting royal power. Being fed by his subjects, either directly or through the taxes that were levied, the prince was in turn supposed to sustain them with the magnitude of his distributions.

The queen shared the same duties as her husband. Teachers even made charity an essential aspect of her role, since gentleness, mildness and compassion seemed such an innate aspect of a woman's nature. In his *Teachings*, Saint Louis recommended to his daughter Isabella, Queen of Navarre, that she have a 'forgiving heart' and help the poor with 'moral support or some alms'.[19] During the fifteenth century, Christine de Pizan advised princesses to visit the sick in hospitals and feed the poor by gathering information about their exact needs.[20] The book of hours Charles IV offered Joan of Évreux proposed the same model of behavior. Illuminations lingered over the charitable gestures of their shared ancestor Saint Louis, who was presented to the queen as a model. The Holy King was depicted feeding a leper with his own hands, caring for a sick man, washing the feet of the poor and burying a dead man.[21] The life of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary (1207-1231), which was a mirror of virtues for female sovereigns, also emphasized the charitable gestures of the princess, who accomplished such acts of mercy as feeding the hungry, caring for the sick and visiting prisoners.

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[15] Ibid., 101.
[16] Chevalier, 'Marie d'Anjou', 95.
[17] Vincent, *Église et société*, 179.
[18] Aladjidi, *Le roi père des pauvres*, 35.
[19] O'Connell, *Les propos de Saint Louis* (Paris: Gallimard, 1974), 193.

Concretely, the queen was supposed to help the poor on a daily basis by means of alms distributed at the palace gates or along the roadside. For these regular gifts, she had an almoner at her service, whose office had been recorded in the reginal *hôtel* since the reign of Marie of Brabant (d. 1321).[22] The almoner was in charge of ensuring that the distributions were carried out properly. These were divided between three budgetary posts made up of offerings to the churches (for the celebration of mass) and two types of alms: ordinary alms regularly distributed on set dates (particularly during large religious festivals) and so-called 'casual' alms given by the king and his wife on all sorts of occasions (notably during their travels). On the eve of Easter 1493, Anne of Brittany had 70 sous given to 'the poorest who were at the gate of the lodging of the said lady in the said place at Compiègne' and 105 sous to a number of paupers 'at the Holy Chapel of the Palace in Paris' in July.[23] The major ceremonies that were held during a reign (such as the coronation, entries and funerals) gave rise to large donations in kind and, more frequently, distributions of money.

All categories of pauper were concerned, including impoverished nobles, the sick, poor schoolchildren, women who were pregnant or had yet to marry, young women who had just given birth, widows and orphans. Women who had fallen on hard times were particularly assisted and continually mentioned in all of the queens' testaments.[24]

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[20] *A Medieval Woman's Mirror of Honor: The Treasury of the City of Ladies, Christine de Pizan,* ed. Charity Cannon Willard (New York: Persea Books, 1989), 87–88.

[21] Joan A Holladay., 'The Education of Jeanne d'Évreux: Personal Piety and Dynastic Salvation in her Book of Hours at the Cloisters', *Art History 17,* no. 4 (1994): 581–99.

[22] De la Selle, *Le service des âmes à la cour*, 35 and 72–73.

[23] 'À plusieurs pouvres qui estoient a la porte du logis de ladite dame audit lieu de Compiengne' and 'en la Saincte Chapelle du Pallays à Paris'. Aladjidi, *Le roi, père des pauvres*, 135.

[24] Ibid., 137.

During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, royal gifts came to focus even more on establishments that provided assistance. This evolution was undoubtedly linked to a change in how the poor were perceived. Society was worried about paupers, whose numbers had increased, and preferred to see them accommodated in hospitals. The female sovereign involved herself in the hospital domain by visiting such establishments (notably the Hôtel-Dieu de Paris, with which she had a special connection, since her deathbed was traditionally donated to this establishment after she died[25]) on the one hand and through her foundations on the other.

This concern for the sick and the poor corresponded above all to the need to reach salvation by justly distributing one's wealth. It was also part of the queen's proper 'governance'. Like the king, she contributed to the circulation of love in the body of her kingdom through her distributions. During the early fourteenth century, the political virtue of charity even seems to have been reserved for her, as if the monarch had delegated this part of his royal duty to her. Indeed, many female sovereigns at the time inscribed their memory and renown in merciful foundations, hospitals and colleges, which they alone (and not the king) were responsible for founding. The testament of Philip IV's wife Joan of Navarre, which was drafted in 1305, thus provided for the foundation of a hospital on her land in Château-Thierry, in the Champagne region, that would welcome pregnant women and sick people who were poor. It equally prescribed that everyone be received there with benevolence and that they be fed and cared for 'as a member of Jesus Christ'.[26] Her daughter-in-law Joan of Burgundy, Philip V's wife, also set an example for founding hospitals. In 1319, the brotherhood of Saint-Jacques-aux-Pèlerins in Paris, which was created at the end of the thirteenth century, organized the construction of a place to welcome pilgrims to the capital. The *Chronique parisienne anonyme de 1316 à 1319* associated the brotherhood, in the founding of this hospice, with the queen and her mother Mahaut of Artois, who were both present when the first stone was laid.[27] In her testaments (1319 and 1325), Joan also decided to found hospitals on her land in the county of Burgundy in Pontarlier and Vesoul, to which she granted annuities of 200 livres and 100 livres respectively.[28] But it seems that her wish went unfulfilled, since no subsequent source attests to either being created.[29]

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[25] Ibid., 211.

[26] Elisabeth A.R. Brown, 'La mort, les testaments et les fondations de Jeanne de Navarre, reine de France (1273-1305)', in *Une histoire pour un royaume (XII^e-XV^e siècle)* (Paris: Perrin, 2010), 124–41.

[27] *Chronique parisienne anonyme de 1316 à 1319*, ed. Amédée Hellot, *Mémoires de la Société de l'Histoire de Paris et de l'Île de France* 11 (1884): 41–42; Henri Bordier, 'La confrérie des pèlerins de Saint-Jacques et ses archives', *Mémoires de la Société de l'Histoire de Paris et de l'Île de France* 1 (1875): 186–228.

Within the royal couple during the first half of the fourteenth century, queens were also the only ones to handle the foundation of university colleges destined to welcome poor students, whom the sources named 'poor clerics' even though it is difficult to ascertain the true level of their poverty.[30] The very first royal college was founded in Paris in March 1305. In her testament, Joan of Navarre created an establishment that was supposed to welcome 70 scholarship-holders in grammar, arts and theology, all chosen from throughout the entire kingdom.[31] College scholarships were paid through an annuity of 2,000 livres taken from the royal revenue for the county of Champagne. This was the first university college to be founded by a layperson, who also happened to be a woman.

A few years later, in the codicil she wrote in 1325, Philip V's wife Joan of Burgundy also decided to found a religious establishment, 'a college of secular people and regular people and other religious mendicants'.[32] Its endowment depended on the sale of the Hôtel de Nesle, which she owned. The executors of her testament redirected the initial endowment toward a university foundation. Thus was born the College of Burgundy, which was destined to welcome 20 scholarship-holders in the arts from the county of Burgundy.[33] Its statutes, which were written by Nicolas de Lyre in 1332, were approved by the pope two years later.

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[28] Paris, AN, J 404 A n° 23.

[29] Nicole Brocard, 'Le Saint-Sépulcre de Salins au XV^{e} siècle : l'autel et le lit, une conception traditionnelle et chrétienne des locaux et de l'assistance', in *Archéologie et architecture hospitalières de l'Antiquité tardive à l'aube des temps mordernes*, ed. François-Olivier Touati (Paris: la Boutique de l'histoire, 2004), 204.

[30] Nathalie Gorochov, 'La notion de pauvreté dans les statuts des collèges fondés à Paris de Louis IX à Philippe le Bel', in *Fondations et œuvres charitables au Moyen Âge*, eds. Jean Dufour and Henri Platelle (Paris: CTHS, 1999) 119–28.

[31] Nathalie Gorochov, *Le collège de Navarre de sa fondation (1305) au début du XV^{e} siècle (1418). Histoire de l'institution, de sa vie intellectuelle et de son recrutement* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1997), 131–32.

[32] 'Un college de seculiers ou reguliers ou d'autres religieux mendianz.' Paris, AN, J 404 A no. 30.

[33] Thierry Kouamé, 'Rex Fundator. Les interventions royales dans les collèges universitaires de Paris, Oxford et Cambridge (XIV^{e}-XV^{e} siècle)', in *Itinéraires du savoir de l'Italie à la Scandinavie (X^{e}-XVI^{e} siècle). Études offertes à Elisabeth Mornet*, ed. Corinne Péneau (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2009), 233.

RELIGIOUS AND SACRED FOUNDATIONS

The role queens played in the area of religion no longer needs to be demonstrated.[34] Their piety in addition to their memorial, ancestral and territorial concerns led them to found churches and grant legacies to religious establishments, either financial or in kind. These foundations were established, in their lifetime or after they died, for the salvation of their souls and out of a desire to accumulate the celestial merit that was essential for the forgiveness of their sins. They also allowed them to ground their memory and power in important sanctuaries in their native kingdoms or principalities, to which they remained attached for the rest of their lives, as their testamentary legacies attest. The Dowager Queen Blanche of Castile was an exemplary model of religious patronage, having founded two Cistercian abbeys in agreement with and with the help of her son Louis IX. The first was founded in 1229 (the Abbey of Maubuisson, where she was buried after her death in 1252) and the other in 1244 (Notre-Dame du Lys, located near Melun, which she chose as the sepulture for her heart).

These large-scale foundations were above all the work of regents (Blanche of Castile), queens and heiress princesses, who had the power and the necessary financial means to establish them. For example, scholarships to the College of Navarre, which was founded by Joan of Navarre, were paid through an annuity of 2000 pounds taken from the royal revenue for the county of Champagne. She also founded the Hospital of Château-Thierry. Joan of Burgundy, heiress to the county of Burgundy, initially envisaged the foundation of a Clarisse convent in Salins in her first testament (1319), something she did not reiterate in her codicil (1325). She instead chose to bequeath the Hôtel de Nesle in order to create a collegiate church or a mendicant convent (a foundation that her executors transformed into a university college). Her mother, Mahaut of Artois, who was heiress to the county of Artois, had herself founded a number of establishments, including a Dominican convent in Thieuloy, near Arras.

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[34] On reginal piety, see: Barbara Drake Boehm, 'Le mécénat de Jeanne d'Évreux', in *1300… l'art au temps de Philippe le Bel*, eds. Danielle Gaborit-Chopin and François Avril (Paris: École du Louvre, 2001), 15–31; Carla Lord, 'Jeanne d'Évreux as a Founder of Chapels. Patronage and Public Piety', in *Women and Art in Early Modern Europe. Patrons, Collectors and Connoisseurs,* ed. C. Lawrence (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 21–36; Yann Grandeau, 'L'exercice de la piété à la cour de France : les dévotions d'Isabeau de Bavière', Actes du 104^{e} Congrès national des Sociétés savantes, Orléans, 1979 : section philologie et histoire-Jeanne d'Arc, une époque, un rayonnement (Paris: CTHS, 1982), 150–52; and Anne Crawford, 'The Piety of Late Medieval English Queens', in *The Church in Pre-Reformation Society: Essays in Honour of F.R.H. du Boulay*, eds. Caroline M. Barron and Christopher Harper-Bill (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1985), 48–57.

Women continued to establish foundations throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, although within a more restrained framework. The focus was no longer on founding large establishments devoted to religion or helping others, but on financially contributing—along with others—to the edification of part of a building or its architectural and artistic renovation. Charles IV's widow (and Dowager Queen) Joan of Évreux thus helped to construct the new Church of the Grands Carmes in the Place Maubert in Paris (1349).[35] The monks responded to her deep devotion to the Virgin Mary and the Holy Family (the order devoting a cult to Marie and her sisters Mary Salome and Mary of Cleophas, who together were known as the 'Three Maries'). The Paris convent was also linked to Saint Louis, since it owed him its establishment in the city in 1256. With this foundation, the queen contributed to exalting the memory of her great-grandfather the Holy King.[36]

Again at the end of the fifteenth century, Anne of Brittany contributed to building a Minimes convent (the order of François de Paule) at the gates of Paris. In 1496, she offered land at Chaillot for the completion of a foundation situated at the Manor of Nigeon. She laid the first stone for the Church of Notre-Dame-de-Toutes-Grâces in 1506, although it was not dedicated until much later, in 1578.[37]

Numerous queens founded liturgical and funerary chapels celebrating the memory of their deceased husbands and children in existing edifices, thus establishing another form of patronage. The Abbey of Saint-Denis, which was the 'cemetery of kings', logically received donations from dowager queens. In 1328, Clementia of Hungary founded a chantry (*chapellenie*) so that monks could celebrate the memory of her deceased husband Louis X.[38] The abbot—or the executors of her testament—chose to establish the foundation in the Chapel of Saint-Louis, which was decorated with a fresco depicting a touching family scene in which Louis X and

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[35] Lord, 'Jeanne d'Évreux as a Founder of Chapels', 33.

[36] Allirot, *Filles de roy de France*, 202.

[37] Elisabeth L'Estrange, 'Le mécénat d'Anne de Bretagne', in *Patronnes et mécènes en France à la Renaissance*, ed. Kathleen Wilson-Chevalier (Saint-Étienne: Publications de l'Université de Saint-Étienne, 2007), 183.

[38] Pierre Moret de Bourchenu, marquis de Valbonnays, 'Testament de Clémence de Hongrie, reyne de France, seconde femme de Louis Hutin', in *Histoire de Dauphiné et des princes qui ont porté le nom de dauphins* (Geneva: Fabri et Barillot 1722), 217–21.

Clementia knelt at the Virgin Mary's feet accompanied by their son John (John I the Posthumous, who died at five days old).[39]

Fifteen years later, Joan of Évreux actively negotiated with the Abbot of Saint-Denis for the creation of a chantry in honor of her deceased husband Charles IV (d. 1328). She had a chapel dedicated to the Virgin and Saint John the Apostle built, painted, and decorated with a magnificent monochrome statue of the Virgin and Child (which gave the chapel its name: Notre-Dame la Blanche).[40] Situated along the eastern aisle of the northern arm of the transept, it contained the tomb of her daughter Marie, who had died in 1341 at the age of 15. The recumbent statue was executed by Jean de Liège. Having been miraculously saved, only the bust remains.[41] Philip VI of Valois's widow Blanche of Navarre founded a funerary chapel within the abbey: the Chapel of Saint-Hippolyte, located in the western aisle of the transept. It was destined to house her own tomb (the plot next to Philip VI already being occupied by his first wife Joan of Burgundy) as well as that of her daughter Joan, who had died a year earlier and whose tomb had been commissioned. Her foundation was accompanied by liturgical celebrations, such as daily masses and anniversaries, which were inscribed on a magnificent decorated charter held at the French National Archives. It opens with the delicately crowned initial 'B', representing the queen (who carries a small church) and her daughter Marie on one side; the king kneeling in prayer on the other side is introduced by the Bishop Saint Hippolytus to Christ, who is followed by Saint Peter, Saint Paul and Saint Denis carrying his own head.[42]

Queens had numerous funerary monuments sculpted for memorial purposes—not the double tombs at Saint-Denis, which the sovereigns handled,[43] but the tombs in honor of their prematurely deceased children (Clementia of Hungary for John I; Blanche of Navarre for Joan; and Anne of Brittany for Charles-Orland) and their relatives. In 1326, Clementia of Hungary commissioned a splendid monument (which is still visible at the Basilica of Saint-Denis, having initially decorated the Jacobin convent in Paris) in honor of one of her most prestigious ancestors: Charles I of Anjou, who was Saint Louis's brother and King of Naples and Sicily (d. 1285) and of whom she was the great-granddaughter. By doing so, the queen wanted to remind people of her prestigious Angevin ancestry and celebrate the memory of her illustrious ancestor, who was a great monarch and capable conqueror, as the epitaph she had inscribed emphasized: 'Here lies the heart of the great King Charles who conquered Sicily who was the brother of monseigneur S. Louis of France'.[44]

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[39] Blaise de Montesquiou-Fezensac and Danielle Gaborit-Chopin, *Le trésor de Saint-Denis: documents divers* (Paris: Picard, 1973-1977), 420–21.

[40] Alain Erlande-Brandenburg, 'La politique funéraire royale', in *Tombeaux royaux et princiers, Dossiers Archéologie et science des origines*, 311 (mars 2006) 54–55.

[41] New York, Metropolitan Museum.

[42] Paris, AN, K 49, no. 76 A and 76 B in Ghislain Brunel, *Images du pouvoir royal. Les chartes décorées des Archives nationales XIII^{e}-XV^{e} siècle* (Paris: Somogy, 2005), 192.

[43] Alain Erlande-Brandenburg et al., *Le roi, la sculpture et la mort. Gisants et tombeaux de la basilique de Saint-Denis* (Paris: Archives départementales de la Seine-Saint-Denis, 1976), 26.

In 1499, the same memorial project pushed Anne of Brittany to commission from the sculptor Michel Colombe a double tomb for her parents Francis II, Duke of Brittany, and Margaret of Foix (today displayed at the Cathedral of Nantes).[45] The monument, which is a true artistic masterpiece, marked the beginning of the Renaissance in France, presenting the four cardinal virtues (Fortitude, Justice, Temperance and Prudence) on each corner. Where weeping figures are usually represented, two series of apostles are placed under an antique arcature. At the feet of the recumbent statues, a lion and a greyhound proudly stand, holding the coat of arms of Brittany and the coats of arms of Brittany and Foix respectively. Anne wanted to celebrate the memory of her parents not only out of emotional attachment, but also in order to highlight her dynastic origins and territorial power.

The pious legacies left by sovereigns when they dictated their testaments equally highlighted their desire for a memorial and territorial anchoring. With their salvation in mind, they wanted to gain as many suffrages as possible, mainly in the form of perpetual celebrations. This mathematical piety, which was shared by all of the faithful, reached unequaled heights in the royal and aristocratic world. Indeed, with their husbands' authorization, queens often had considerable sums of money for paying their testamentary provisions (thus, Philip VI granted his wife 20,000 livres tournois for her foundations).[46] However, far from extending their donations to the whole kingdom, they chose to honor specific places, those that were primarily Parisian or anchored in their lands.

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[44] 'Ci gist li cuers du grant roy Charles qui conquit Cezile qui fu freres de monseigneur S. Loys de France.' Alain Erlande-Brandenburg, *Le roi est mort. Études sur les funérailles, les sépultures et les tombeaux des rois de France jusqu'à la fin du XIII^{e} siècle* (Geneva: 1975), 118.

[45] Elisabeth L'Estrange, 'Le mécénat d'Anne de Bretagne', in *Patronnes et mécènes en France à la Renaissance,* ed. Kathleen Wilson-Chevalier (Saint-Etienne: Publications de l'Université de Saint-Etienne, 2007), 185.

[46] Murielle Gaude-Ferragu, 'Les dernières volontés de la reine de France. Les deux testaments de Jeanne de Bourgogne, femme de Philippe VI de Valois (1329, 1336)', *Annuaire-Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de France* (Paris: SHF, 2009), 23–66.

Paris was always favored in the testaments of queens. As the heart of the kingdom, the city was also where they resided in the fourteenth century. Their gifts were above all part of a royal 'testamentary memory' that was first Capetian and then Valois, one in which each queen repeated the primary legacies of her predecessors. A form of institutional piety was combined with personal devotions, and all the major Parisian churches—which were often linked to the monarchy—benefitted from it. This was not a specifically female form of piety, since, apart from a few differences, sovereigns were also the patrons of the same kinds of establishments.[47] In her Parisian legacy, Philip VI's wife Joan of Burgundy thus took up the pious tradition of her predecessors, leaving bequests to the Abbey of Saint-Denis, Notre-Dame de Paris, Sainte-Chapelle, mendicant convents, the Cordeliers in Longchamp and Lourcine, the Dominicans in Poissy and the Cistercians in Maubuisson. The queen's testamentary anchoring was established on her personal lands, those that were part of her dowry and especially her former dower (Anjou, Touraine and Maine). She also chose to support her native region, the duchy of Burgundy, with donations. It was there that her heart was to be buried next to her parents after her death (Abbey of Cîteaux).

For queens, religious patronage also came in the form of art, iconography (stained-glass windows, frescos and paintings), sculpture (statues and retables) and orfevrerie (reliquaries, crosses and statuettes). The 'royal windows', which were conceived for the high windows in the Cathedral of Évreux, were thus the fruit of joint donations from Charles VI, Peter of Mortain and Philip VI's wife Blanche of Navarre. They celebrated the peace made with Charles of Navarre, which the dowager queen had worked extremely hard to achieve and which reasserted the King of France's hold over the Norman duchy. One of the windows depicts Blanche praying before a beautiful representation of the Virgin and Child.[48]

Female sovereigns also gave gifts of retables. One of the most famous of these is the retable for the main altar that Joan of Évreux had sculpted for the Abbey of Maubuisson, certain parts of which have been conserved. Decorated with three-dimensional figures, it depicts the Last Supper. Images of Charles IV, Joan and their daughters Marie and Blanche are shown in scenes representing the queen who commissioned it and her family.[49]

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[47] Ibid., 23–66.

[48] Philippe Plagnieux, *L'art du Moyen Âge en France* (Paris: Citadelles & Mazenod, 2010), 386.

[49] Drake Boehm, 'Le mécénat de Jeanne d'Evreux', 17–18.

However, the most frequent types of offerings were not made of stone, but of gold and gilded silver—such as the exceptionally refined image of the reliquary Joan of Évreux bequeathed to the Abbey of Saint-Denis in 1339 (now held at the Louvre[50]). This wonderful statue depicting the Virgin and Child in gilded silver attests to the importance of female patronage and the skills of Parisian metalsmiths. The Virgin is placed on a rectangular base decorated with scenes from the childhood and Passion of Christ. She holds the Infant Jesus in one arm, while in the other hand she presents a fleur-de-lis containing, among other things, virginal milk.[51]

These pieces of orfevrerie, which were often reliquaries, reveal the bonds that were established between queens and the sacred world. Queens managed to gather dozens of reliquaries in their treasury, some of which were among the most prestigious examples in all of Christianity. The receptacles they chose for honoring them were made of the most precious materials, including gold and gilded silver, which were often decorated with pearls, diamonds and precious stones. They took the form of crosses, statuettes, paintings and elaborate constructions. The royal offering was commemorated with an inscription and the apposition of coats of arms. The Virgin and Child donated to Saint-Denis by Joan of Évreux bears the following inscription: 'This image given to this house by the Queen Joan of Évreux, Queen of France and Navarre, companion of the King Charles, the 28th day of April in the year M CCC XXXIX' (*Ceste ymage donna ceans ma dame La Royne Jehanne d'Evreux, royne de France et de Navarre, compaigne du roy Charles, le XXVIIIe jour d'avril l'an M CCC XXXIX)* (1339).

Such an accumulation of holy remains is exceptional. Like the king and the princes of the blood, female sovereigns owned some of the most precious relics, relics of the Passion as well as indirect relics from the Virgin (milk and hair), most of which were from the Great Shrine at the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris. Their husbands and royal successors had offered them the fragments of these relics, which they carefully conserved. Clementia of Hungary had a reliquary cross containing a piece of the True Cross,[52] while Joan of Évreux kept a nearly complete accumulation of relics of the

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[50] Plagnieux, *L'art du Moyen Âge*, 370.

[51] Drake Boehm, 'Le mécénat de Jeanne d'Evreux', 19.

[52] Louis Douët-d'Arcq, 'Inventaire et vente après décès des biens de la reine Clémence de Hongrie, veuve de Louis le Hutin, 1328', in *Nouveau recueil de comptes de l'argenterie des rois de France* (Paris: Renouard, 1874), 37–112.

Passion, which she offered to the Abbey of Saint-Denis in an act drafted in 1343. They were contained in a gilded-silver shrine depicting in miniature the Great Shrine at the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris.[53] Among other things, it contained a piece of the True Cross, 'which Saint Louis, King of France, [had the habit of] carrying on him' (*que saint Louis, roy de France, souloit [avait l'habitude de] porter sur luy*), as well as the blood and hair of Christ and pieces of the holy sponge and 'our Holy Lord's gown'.[54]

The quest for these 'fragments of eternity' continued in the fifteenth century. When Charlotte of Savoy died in 1483, the inventory of her belongings revealed that she had fragments of the True Cross and 'our Holy Lord's gown'.[55]

While relics of the Passion and from the Virgin established universal cults, others attest to more personal devotions. Whether they involved the bonds between two families or two territorial spaces, queens played an important role in circulating and promoting new cults. Clementia of Hungary owned a beautiful silver reliquary statue of Saint Louis of Toulouse (d. 1297), a great saint of the Angevin dynasty from whom she was descended; she later offered this statue to her cousin Philip VI of Valois.[56] Many female sovereigns had relics of the great saint of the Capetian dynasty, Saint Louis, which they gave to churches or circulated within the royal family, directly contributing to promoting his cult.[57] Philip VI's wife Joan of Burgundy, who was the Holy Saint's granddaughter, owned one of his psalters, which was given to her by her mother Agnes of France and 'with which he learned to read'.[58] In her testament, Blanche of Navarre left a reliquary containing one of Saint Louis's 'joints' to the Hôtel-Dieu of Vernon, which had been founded by the king himself, as well as his 'miraculous' breviary to her nephew Charles II of Navarre.[59]

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[53] Paris, AN, K 43, no. 27; Montesquiou-Fezensac and Gaborit-Chopin, *Le trésor de Saint-Denis*, vol. 1, n° 5; and Lord, 'Jeanne d'Évreux as a Founder of Chapels', 28.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Alexandre Tuetey, 'Inventaire des biens de Charlotte de Savoie', *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* 26 (1865): 358–66 and 423–42.

[56] De Valbonnays, 'Testament de Clémence de Hongrie', 217–21.

[57] Allirot, *Filles de roy de France*.

[58] Leyden, University Library, Ms. Latin 76A; Patrick de Winter, *La bibliothèque de Philippe le Hardi, duc de Bourgogne (1364-1404)* (Paris: CNRS, 1985), 260–61.

[59] Brigitte Buettner, 'Le système des objets dans le testament de Blanche de Navarre', *Clio* 19: *Femmes et images* (2004).

At the end of the fifteenth century, Anne of Brittany strived to promote the cult of the Breton Saint Ursula, which was just developing in the Medieval West. To do so, she had the nave offered by the city of Tours in 1500 (during her solemn entry) transformed into a reliquary for Saint Ursula and her 11,000 virgins. There remain six sumptuously enameled statues of saints; the main one depicts Saint Ursula in gold and passes as an effigy of Anne of Brittany.[60] The same saint is presented in the famous illumination painted by Jean Bourdichon and which adorns her *Great Hours*. The queen is depicted kneeling in prayer before the Pious Virgin. Behind her stand three saints. Ursula is in the middle, wearing a crown and holding an arrow (symbol of her martyrdom) and the banner of Brittany, recalling Ursula's origins. To her left is Helene, mother of Emperor Constantine, holding a pole mounted with a gold cross, an allusion to her discovery of the True Cross (in Jerusalem, in around the year 327). To Ursula's right is Saint Anne, the Virgin's mother and Anne of Brittany's patron saint.[61]

Beyond the prestige linked to such an accumulation, reliquaries—like other pieces of orfevrerie—were also used in the celebration of liturgy in the reginal chapel. In her codicil, Isabeau of Bavaria mentioned her great reliquary 'which serves at our chapel in solemn festivals' (*qui sert en notre chappelle aux festes solennelles*). This reliquary was a large cross mounted with a gold crown decorated with pearls and stones, held by two angels, and in which were set numerous relics.[62] Reliquaries were also used for the queen's personal devotion. Illuminations depicted her kneeling in prayer before a cross or a reliquary statue, giving the saint thanks and imploring his or her help. In the well-known book of hours painted by Jean Pucelle, Joan of Évreux was thus represented praying before Saint Louis.[63]

Like all of the faithful, female sovereigns above all sought the miraculous power attached to relics, which were privileged points of contact between heaven and earth. People called upon their protection and help during perilous moments, such as childbirth or the moments before death (Charles VI died holding a fragment of the True Cross).[64]

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[60] See: the illumination in Chap. 1, Fig. 1.1, depicting Anne of Brittany, Reims, Palais du Tau; Thierry Crépin-Leblond, 'Que reste-t-il du trésor d'Anne de Bretagne?' in *Anne de Bretagne*, 81.

[61] *Grandes Heures d'Anne de Bretagne* (Tours, 1505–1508), Paris, BnF, Ms. Latin 9474, fol. 3; Didier le Fur, 'Anne de Bretagne était-elle pieuse?', in *Anne de Bretagne*, 58.

[62] Paris, BnF, Ms. Fr. 6544, fol. 1.

[63] Holladay, 'The Education of Jeanne d'Évreux', 589.

The search for this very salvational virtue pushed sovereigns to journey along the 'paths of faith'. Isabeau of Bavaria's travels were not purely political. She also visited important places of pilgrimage, such as Saint-Sanctin-de-Chuisnes, near Chartres (where the Virgin's belt had been found), or Saint-Fiacre, near Meaux.[65] On numerous occasions, she sent pilgrim-vicars to important sanctuaries in the kingdom to pray for the healing of Charles VI or her own salvation. In 1397, Henri Prevost thus went to the tomb of Saint Louis of Toulouse (or Anjou) in Marseille to have a novena celebrated for the queen.[66] Marie of Anjou made a number of pilgrimages, including Puy in 1424 (following the king) and Mont-Saint-Michel (alone) in May 1447. Toward the end of her life, she left for Santiago de Compostela and died upon her return, at the Cistercian Abbey of Notre-Dame des Châtelliers.[67]

The religious patronage of the queens of France was therefore remarkable, both in terms of the foundations they established—particularly when it came to universities and hospitals—and the magnitude of their financial and artistic donations. This was not, however, specific to female sovereigns, but was also related to the general devotional policies of 'women in power'. This was exemplified by Mahaut of Artois (d. 1329), who founded hospitals and convents on her land and donated to numerous Parisian abbeys,[68] and Isabella of Portugal, Duchess of Burgundy (d. 1471), who established many foundations—notably hospitals—and actively supported the reform of the Clarisse Order led by Saint Colette of Corbie.[69]

Queens also played an important role in the promotion of cults. Some of Saint Louis's descendants participated in celebrating and spreading his memory, while others promoted 'territorial' cults, such as Anne of Brittany, who celebrated Ursula, a universal saint originally from Brittany, and her companions. In the sacred sphere, their role often complemented that of the king, whose actions should not be underestimated. Philip IV the Fair was one of the most fervent propagators of the cult of Saint Louis, particularly through his foundation of the Dominican Convent in Poissy.[70] During the fifteenth century, Charles VI favored in his testament charitable establishments 'founded by monseigneur saint Louis of France'.[71]

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[64] Yann Grandeau, 'La mort et les obsèques de Charles VI', *Bulletin philologique et historique du comité des travaux historiques et scientifiques* (1970): 133–86.

[65] Paris, AN, KK 41, fol. 58; Paris, AN, KK 46, fol. 40.

[66] Paris, AN, KK 41, fol. 186.

[67] Chevalier, 'Marie d'Anjou, une reine sans gloire', 81–98.

[68] *L'enfant oublié. Le gisant de Jean de Bourgogne et le mécénat de Mahaut d'Artois en Franche-Comté au XIVe siècle* (Besançon: Musée des Beaux-Arts et d'Archéologie, 1997-1998), 48–9, 58–9 and 62–63.

[69] Monique Sommé, *Isabelle de Portugal, duchesse de Bourgogne. Une femme au pouvoir au XVe siècle* (Lille: Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 1998), 458–78.

The study of the devotions of queens raises the issue of whether or not there was a pantheon specifically linked to them. In reality, such a pantheon is rather difficult to define, at least based on their treasury of relics alone. While their celestial court was indeed composed of the great figures of female sanctity (such as the main reliquary of Saint Ursula owned by Clementia of Hungary[72] or the relics of Saint Catherine and Saint Margaret held by Joan of Évreux[73]), kings also possessed such fragments. Furthermore, reliquaries constantly circulated within the courts, sharing—like other pieces from their treasury—in the 'donation policies' of princes and their wives.

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[70] Elisabeth Lalou, 'Les abbayes fondées par Philippe le Bel', *Revue Mabillon* 63 (1991): 143–65; Alain Erlande-Brandenburg, 'La priorale Saint-Louis de Poissy', *Bulletin monumental* 129 (1971): 85–112.

[71] 'Fondés de monseigneur saint Loys de France.' Aladjidi, *Le Roi, père des pauvres*, 186.

[72] De Valbonnays, 'Testament de Clémence de Hongrie', 217–21.

[73] Constant Leber, ed., 'Le compte de l'exécution du testament et darraine voulenté de feue dame de bonne mémoire Madame la royne Jehanne de Evreux jadis royne de France et de Navarre', in *Collection des meilleures dissertations, notices et traités particuliers relatifs à l'histoire de France* (Paris: G.-A. Dentu, 1832) 19:66.

Chapter 9: The Queen's Treasury: Art, Literature and Power

The beautiful Castle of Chenonceau, perched on the Cher River as if in slumber, attests to the quality of female patronage. Although it was constructed in the early sixteenth century by the crown's great financier Thomas Bohier, the embellishments made first by Diane of Poitiers and later by Catherine de' Medici give it the appearance of a 'queen's castle'.[1] Catherine de' Medici also had the Tuileries Palace built and the Louvre extended, even planning the long gallery along the waterfront that was completed under Henry IV.[2] In her *hôtel particulier* (which has since been destroyed), there were piles of rare books, ancient manuscripts, tapestries, enamels, silks and hard stones, all of which created something of a museum reflecting a passion for collecting that was also harbored with even greater intensity by Marie de' Medici.

This passion was nonetheless not specific to the Medici queens. The last medieval queens had already accumulated tapestries, cameos, ivories and examples of orfevrerie in their personal treasuries. Art was a means of governing that was consubstantial with both the sovereign's and his wife's power. Furthermore, the queen could serve as a 'cultural ambassadress' in this domain, introducing into her adopted country artistic styles from her 'native country', which was more or less a faraway land.[3]

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[1] Jean-Pierre Babelon, *Chenonceau* (Paris: Adam Biro, 2002), 11.

[2] Dominique Fernandez, 'La France italienne. Les raisons de deux mariages royaux', in *Trésor des Médicis*, ed. Maria Sframeli (Paris: Flammarion, 2010), 39.

[3] Susan Groag Bell, 'Medieval Women Book Owners: Arbiters of Lay Piety and Ambassadors of Culture', in *Women and Power in the Middle Ages*, eds. Mary Erler and Maryanne Kowaleski (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1988), 176.

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Manuscripts, whether luxury or more ordinary editions, also constituted an essential part of her treasury. The establishment of a library (*librairie*, in medieval French) composed of dozens and even hundreds of books was in itself a sign of identity—a social and aristocratic (if not royal) marker. Historians have recorded the details of the wondrous library at the Louvre established by Charles V, who was the very model of the learned king. His library was unrivaled, containing thousands of manuscripts that he had either inherited, been given, or for which he had commissioned translations (especially for books on political science).[4] This collection, which was not only about displaying his splendor but also about reading and study, allowed the king to integrate into the French cultural patrimony knowledge that now served as an element of power. However, even though the libraries established by women were smaller, curiosity and literary patronage were not exclusively the king's prerogative. Queens would also commission translations and original works, and among the most prized items in Charles V's library were the manuscripts he had inherited from his grandmother Joan of Burgundy.

Art and Politics: The Queen's Treasury

The queen had a sizeable treasury, which was separate from that of the king. It was supplied with numerous gifts, relayed by her active patronage, and constituted her power. This was an ancient phenomenon, exemplified in the sixth century by Queen Brunehaut, who acted as regent for her son and amassed jewels, precious clothing and pieces of orfevrerie.[5]

However, the treasuries assembled by fourteenth- and fifteenth-century princesses operated on a completely different scale. They were not about possessing only a few beautiful examples of orfevrerie, but about owning hundreds and even thousands of objects. In this vein, Charles V established the largest collection, totaling 3,900 objects when he died in 1380.[6] Queens too shared in this new 'impulse to collect'. Clementia of Hungary,

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[4] Françoise Autrand, *Charles V* (Paris: Fayard, 1994), 719.

[5] Bruno Dumézil, *La reine Brunehaut* (Paris: Fayard, 2009), 124–25; Pauline Stafford, 'Queens and Treasure in the Early Middle Ages', in *Treasure in the Medieval West*, ed. Elizabeth M. Tyler (York: York Medieval Press, 2000), 61–82.

[6] Jules Labarte, *Inventaire du mobilier de Charles V, roi de France* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1879); Yann Potin, 'Le roi trésorier : Identité, légitimité et fonction des trésors du roi (France, XIII^{e}-XIV^{e} siècle)', in *Le trésor au Moyen Âge : Questions et perspectives de recherche*, ed. Lucas Burkart (Neuchâtel: Institut d'histoire de l'art et de muséologie, 2005), 100–2.

Philip VI's wife Joan of Burgundy, Joan of Évreux and Blanche of Navarre all brought together fabulous treasures, as attested to primarily in their inventories and testaments.

The oldest inventory of property belonging to a French princess that has been conserved is that of Clementia of Hungary, which was drafted after her death in 1328.[7] It describes an incredibly rich treasury and library.[8] The princess, who was the granddaughter of the King of Naples Charles II of Anjou, was raised by her grandmother Marie of Hungary in one of the most prestigious courts of the first half of the fourteenth century. In July 1315, she left Naples to join her future husband Louis X. However, her journey across the Mediterranean Sea proved a nightmare. The boat sank, and Clementia lost her jewels, gowns and dowry. In France, the princess experienced more ordeals, with Louis X dying a year after their marriage celebration while she was pregnant. John I, their child, was born in November 1316 and only lived for five days. Clementia's long widowhood was spent between Paris, the Provence region and the estates in her dower. Over the years, she acquired an extraordinary treasury with an estimated value of over 21,000 livres parisis in 1328 (by way of comparison, Charlotte of Savoy's combined assets were estimated to be worth 5,500 livres in 1483[9]). Like all princely treasuries, it was composed of jewels, examples of orfevrerie, tapestries, fabrics, clothing and manuscripts.

Treasuries served a primarily economic purpose. For both queens and princes, they were a monetary reserve of goods that could be sold, pledged, or melted in order to meet immediate financial needs. Thus, in her testament, Isabeau of Bavaria planned for some of her furniture to be sold when she died to pay for her pious foundations.[10] More concretely, treasuries also served to establish a queen's rank, identity and power. The precious crockery owned by female sovereigns was displayed in dressers or used as tableware during official receptions and banquets. This ceremonial crockery was composed of gold and gilded silver goblets bearing the queen's coat of arms in enamel, nefs, salt cellars and silver dishes. The treasury established by Philip VI's wife Joan of Burgundy (with over a hundred pieces of orfevrerie inventoried in 1353) included extraordinary aiguières. One of them depicted Samson slaying the lion, while others were shaped like mermaids, swifts, roosters and men playing bagpipes, seated on animals, or straddling griffins.[11] More unusual pieces decorated the tables, including 'serpents' tongues' obtained from the concretion located in the reptiles' heads, which were mounted in gold or silver on 'trees' called *languiers*. With their reputation for oozing in the presence of certain poisons, they were used to detect any possibility of toxic substances having been distilled in food.[12]

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[7] Louis Douët-d'Arcq, 'Inventaire et vente après décès des biens de la reine Clémence de Hongrie, veuve de Louis le Hutin, 1328', in *Nouveau recueil de comptes de l'argenterie des rois de France* (Paris: Renouard, 1874), 37–112.

[8] Jean-Patrice Boudet, 'La bibliothèque de Clémence de Hongrie : un reflet de la culture d'une reine de France ?' in *La cour du prince*, eds. Murielle Gaude-Ferragu, Bruno Laurioux and Jacques Paviot, 499–514.

[9] Alexandre Tuetey, 'Inventaire des biens de Charlotte de Savoie', *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, XXVI (1865), 358–66 and 423–42.

[10] Paris, BnF, Ms. Fr. 6544, fol. 7 (1408).

Jewels—particularly crowns, circlets and diadems—were also a key element of the queen's identity. Like her husband, the queen had a number of crowns, which were each used for certain political and ceremonial circumstances. These included receiving crowns like those she wore during the banquet following her coronation, lighter crowns and diadems, which were worn on less solemn occasions. In her testament, Clementia of Hungary, who owned six, bequeathed the most precious one made entirely of gold and inlaid with ten large rubies, 50 small emeralds and 40 large pearls to her nephew Humbert (the future Humbert II, Dauphin of Viennois).[13] Philip VI's wife Joan of Burgundy gave her daughter Marie four of her most beautiful crowns and six of her most beautiful diadems. Her first testament (1329) stated that she offered the future Queen of France (her son John did not marry Bonne of Luxembourg until 1332) her largest crown and her largest circlet. Perhaps she wanted to introduce a new practice, whereby the female crown symbolized sovereignty and was handed down from queen to queen over the generations.[14] In 1360, the future Charles V inherited from his stepmother Queen Joan of Boulogne a crown known as the 'Saint-Denis circlet', which was later worn by his wife

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[11] Louis Douët d'Arcq, *Comptes de l'argenterie des rois de France au XIV^{e} siècle* (Paris: Renouard, 1851), 77–192 and 303–32; *L'inventaire du trésor du dauphin futur Charles V, 1363 : Les débuts d'un grand collectionneur*, ed. Danielle Gaborit-Chopin, *Archives de l'Art français, Nouvelle période* 32 (1996): 10; and Louis Douët d'Arcq, *Inventaire des meubles de la reine Jeanne de Boulogne, seconde femme du roi Jean (1360)* (Paris: Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes, 1879).

[12] Franck Collard, *Le crime de poison au Moyen Âge*, (Paris: PUF, 2003), 85.

[13] Douët-d'Arcq, 'Inventaire et vente après décès des biens de la reine Clémence de Hongrie', 38.

[14] Paris, AN, J 907 no. 6.

Joan of Burgundy.[15] These many examples of finery were one of the characteristics of female treasuries, along with jewelry, rings, necklaces and precious chaplets.[16] Clementia of Hungary owned some 30 rings set with precious stones, one of which was decorated with an exceptional ruby estimated at 1,000 livres parisis.[17] There were also many clasps, which were often decorated with precious stones and sometimes bore animal or plant motifs.

Clothing, another instrument and expression of power, was made of silk, velvet and gold fabrics that were richly embroidered and decorated with furs, pearls and stones. It also attested to a princess's dignity, just like her 'chambers' (which included bed trimmings with canopies, curtains and bedcovers), wall hangings and large tapestries printed with coats of arms or floral and animal patterns. Clementia of Hungary owned an ensemble of eight tapestries depicting hunting scenes. For festivals and ceremonies in the fifteenth century, it was fashionable to hang large tapestries representing narrative scenes. Thus, in 1400, Isabeau of Bavaria commissioned a tapestry portraying the 'destruction of Troy' and had one representing the quest for the Holy Grail repaired.[18] Anne of Brittany also owned a beautiful collection of tapestries rendering biblical, antique and historical events—such as the one depicting the 'destruction of Jerusalem', which decorated the room where her body lay in state at the Castle of Blois when she died.[19]

Beyond this concrete use of the queen's treasury, its very establishment asserted her power to accumulate and her capacity to save up the pieces of orfevrerie that expressed her dignity, a connection reinforced by the proximity of substance and ownership between gold, precious stones and power.[20]

The other purpose of the treasury was linked to the 'power of the gift', which was attributed to the prince and his wife. This power assumed many forms, such as donations to churches for the soul's salvation, diplomatic gifts and gifts between royal and princely courts, all of which shared in a vast circulation of goods, jewels and manuscripts. The queen fully participated in this. The most important exchanges took place ritually on 1 January during the Feast of *Étrennes*, when gifts were distributed for the New Year.[21] This custom, which was documented as soon as the early fourteenth century, reached its peak at the turn of the fourteenth to fifteenth centuries. At that time, the gifts that were exchanged represented considerable sums of money. In 1399, John of Berry received a gold cross worth 7,400 livres tournois from Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy. Isabeau played an active role in this standardized system of gifts and counter-gifts. In January 1392, she offered her husband Charles VI a golden necklace decorated with rubies, pearls and diamonds. She gave a diamond ring to her brother-in-law the Duke of Orleans, gold clasps to her brother Louis of Bavaria and his daughters and 2,800 francs in gifts in the form of rings and cups to the women of her *hôtel* and her confessor.[22] However, the most beautiful example of a commission was undoubtedly the magnificent 'gold horse' (*Goldenes Rössl*, now held at Altötting in Bavaria[23]) she gave the king for New Year's 1405. This small construction in gold is shaped like a theater with several levels. At the top sits the Virgin and Child under a bower of leaves decorated with precious stones, enamel flowers and pearls, while two angels carry the crown of the Queen of Heaven above them. Three saints—Saint John the Evangelist, Saint John the Baptist and Saint Catherine of Alexandria—are depicted as children kneeling before the Mother and Child. In front of the vines kneel Charles VI and a knight holding the royal helm. On the lower level, a valet waits with the king's horse, which gives the jewel its name. The refinement, technical perfection and quality of the materials employed (enameled and chiseled gold, gilded silver, sapphires, rubies and pearls) make this one of the most beautiful pieces still conserved today, an exceptional document attesting to both the artistic prowess of Parisian goldsmiths and the importance of the queen's patronage.

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[15] *L'inventaire du trésor du dauphin futur Charles V, 1363 : Les débuts d'un grand collectionneur*, ed. Danielle Gaborit-Chopin, Archives de l'Art français, Nouvelle période 32 (1996): 10.

[16] Michèle Bubenicek, 'Instruments de pouvoir ou objets de collection ? Les joyaux de Yolande de Flandre', in *Retour aux sources. Textes, études et documents d'histoire médiévale offerts à Michel Parisse* (Paris: Picard, 2004), 460.

[17] Douët-d'Arcq, 'Inventaire et vente après décès des biens de la reine Clémence de Hongrie', 41.

[18] Paris, AN, KK 41, fol. 223 v°; Paris, AN, KK 42, fol. 47 v°.

[19] Thierry Crépin-Leblond, 'Que reste-t-il du trésor d'Anne de Bretagne ?' in *Anne de Bretagne. Une histoire,un mythe*, (Paris: Somogy Éditions d'art, 2007) 81.

[20] Potin, 'Le roi trésorier', 100.

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[21] Brigitte Buettner, 'Past Presents: New Year's Gifts at the Valois Courts, ca 1400', *The Art Bulletin* 83, no. 4 (2001): 598–625; Jan Hirschbiegel, 'Le commerce des étrennes dans les cours françaises au temps de la querelle entre Armagnacs et Bourguignons', in *La création artistique en France autour de 1400*, ed. Elisabeth Taburet-Delahaye (Paris: École du Louvre, 2006), 193–206; and Hirschbiegel, *Étrennes. Untersuchungen zum höfischen Geschenkverkehr im spätmittelalterlichen Frankreich der Zeit König Karls VI (1380–1422)* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 2003).

[22] Jenny Stratford, 'The Goldenes Rössl and the French Royal Collections', in *Treasure in the Medieval West*, 128.

[23] Ibid., 109–33; *Paris-1400 Les arts sous Charles VI,* ed. Elisabeth Taburet-Delehaye, Réunion des Musées nationaux (Paris: Fayard, 2004), 174.

Books and Culture: The Queen's Library

Often received as gifts or as part of inheritances, the manuscripts assembled by queens also reflect their 'cultural policy'. While owning a work did not necessarily imply that it was read, various clues attest to the fact that women read increasingly during the fourteenth century. Clementia of Hungary and Joan of Évreux owned 'loupes' to facilitate this, and Isabeau of Bavaria ordered a gold bookmark.[24] Although this book does not seek to establish an exhaustive catalog of reginal libraries, it is nonetheless necessary to examine their numerical and qualitative importance on the one hand and the literary specificities they presented on the other. In other words, were there 'gendered' libraries revealing specifically feminine literary sensibilities?[25]

Female sovereigns established major book collections. Clementia of Hungary's library offers an early example of this. The inventory of her goods when she died in 1328 indicates the presence of 41 volumes—a significantly higher number than that of her husband Louis X, whose book inventory was limited to 27 volumes when he died in 1316.[26] As for Philip VI's wife Joan of Burgundy, it is impossible to know the precise extent of the library she owned, since the inventory of her goods—if it was even taken—has disappeared. However, 22 manuscripts belonging to her have been located, which leads one to believe that she owned many more. Her collection would constitute one of the highlights of the library established by her grandson Charles V.

This royal library was a considerable one (numbering 1,000 volumes in 1380), and later queens were never able to rival it. The collections established by women nonetheless brought together many works. Joan of Évreux's library (1371) was comprised of at least 49 volumes,[27] that of Isabeau of Bavaria at least 39 (although the sources are rather incomplete without the inventories[28]) and that of Charlotte of Savoy (1483) over 100.[29] The traditional estimate for Anne of Brittany's library exceeds 1,500 units. In reality, a number of works (1,140 in total) 'in Latin, French, Italian, Greek and Hebrew' were brought over from Naples by Charles VIII and belonged to the royal couple.[30]

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[24] Lequain, *L'éducation des femmes*, 605.

[25] Danièle Alexandre-Bidon, 'Prier au féminin : les livres d'heures des femmes', in *Homo religiosus. Autour de Jean Delumeau* (Paris: Fayard, 1997), 527–34.

[26] Hasenohr, 'L'essor des bibliothèques privées', 248–49; Boudet, 'La bibliothèque de Clémence de Hongrie', 499–514; Anne Holladay, 'Fourteenth-Century Queens as Collectors and Readers of Books', in *Books and Readers in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Tennessee: University of Tennessee, 2003), 238–59; and Anne-Marie Legaré and Bertrand Schnerb, eds., *Livres et lectures de femmes en Europe entre Moyen Âge et Renaissance* (Brepols: Turnhout, 2007).

The manuscripts were of great quality and primarily in parchment. Their prices varied according to how luxurious the binding was as well as according to the number and artistic quality of the illuminations they contained. The 40 or so volumes belonging to Clementia of Hungary had an estimated value of over 530 livres parisis. She had received some of them from her husband Louis X (d. 1316) and pursued her collection after his death, thanks to the considerable budget she was given as dowager queen. Some of these books were luxury editions worth quite a lot of money, including the following: a breviary with gold clasps worth 60 livres parisis, a psalter with 'gold and azure letters' worth 30 livres, an *Almanach perpetuum* decorated with 17 illuminations worth 30 livres and a book of hours with enameled binding decorated with precious stones worth 28 livres.[31] Some miniatures were true masterpieces commissioned from the best artists of the time, such as the well-known psalter that belonged to the future John II's wife Bonne of Luxembourg, which was superbly illuminated by Jean le Noir and his daughter Bourgot (today held at the Cloisters in New York)[32].

It would, however, be a mistake to think that every work was richly illuminated. Often only sacred texts (liturgical and devotional works) were luxuriously decorated, like a royal offering to the divine cult. Library collections were more frequently made up of current volumes in parchment that, while respectably bound, were not particularly ornate.[33] Charlotte of Savoy thus owned 100 books, most of which did not have much market value,[34] although at least two manuscripts were illuminated by a famous contemporary painter who worked in the queen's service for ten years from 1469 to 1479: Jean Colombe (the *Douze Périls d'enfer* and the first volume of *De Vita Christi*).[35]

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[27] Paris, BnF, Ms Fr. 7855, pp. 412–14.

[28] Tracy Adams, *The Life and Afterlife of Isabeau of Bavaria*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 229.

[29] Anne-Marie Legaré, 'Charlotte de Savoie's Library and Illuminators', *Journal of the Early Book Society for the Study of Manuscripts and Printing History* 4 (2001): 32.

[30] 'En latin, françoys, italien, grec et esbrieu.' Cynthia J. Brown, *The Queen's Library: Image-Making at the Court of Anne of Brittany, 1477-1514* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011); Michael Jones, 'Les manuscrits enluminés d'Anne de Bretagne : livres précieux ou instruments de propagande ?', in *Anne de Bretagne*, 85–92.

[31] Boudet, 'La bibliothèque de Clémence de Hongrie', 499–514.

[32] François Avril, *L'enluminure à la cour de France au XIV^{e} siècle* (Paris: Chêne, 1978), 35.

As items in their treasuries and objects of circulation between courts, books also reflected the literary interests of female sovereigns. Teachers and moralists recommended that they read religious and moral works and condemned books written for entertainment, such as novels and fables. Queens partly respected such recommendations. A study of their libraries attests to the clear preponderance of liturgical and religious books in addition to works for edification, which were specific to female libraries (their share being smaller in the libraries of their male counterparts).[36] These types of works represented three fifths of Clementia of Hungary's library. The majority were in Latin. Liturgical works were destined to be used within the framework of the Christian cult, while paraliturgical works were for more personal use. For celebrating mass in her palatine chapel, Clementia owned two graduals (containing liturgical chants), a missal, an Ordinary of the mass and a processional (including chants and processional music). She also had six breviaries (books comprised of prayers to be recited at canonical hours), three psalters and a book of hours. Anne of Brittany had many richly illuminated books of hours, which she carefully conserved, including the *Great Hours* illuminated by Jean Bourdichon and the sophisticated volume of *Small Hours* (which later belonged to Catherine de' Medici and dated back to the period of her marriage to Louis XII).[37]

Other religious books and works for edification, which were designed for laypeople, were written in vernacular language. Like most noblewomen, female sovereigns preferred French adaptations to works in Latin, a language they usually had not mastered since it was not a part of their education. Thus, they all owned a well-known manual for religious and moral instruction used by laypeople: the *Somme le Roi*, which was composed in 1279 by the Dominican Laurent d'Orléans, Philip III the Bold's confessor. Hagiographical collections also figured in large numbers in their libraries, especially Jacobus de Voragine's *The Golden Legend*, which offered edifying models of the lives of female and male saints.

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[33] Françoise Robin, 'Le luxe des collections aux XIV^e^ et XV^e^ siècles', in *Histoire des bibliothèques françaises,*vol. I, *Les bibliothèques médiévales du VI^e^ siècle à 1530*, ed. André Vernet (Paris: Promodis - Éd. du Cercle de la Librairie, 1989), 202.

[34] Legaré, 'Charlotte de Savoie's Library', 33.

[35] François Avril and Nicole Reynaud, *Les manuscrits à peintures 1400-1520* (Paris: Flammarion, 1998), 326–27.

[36] Geneviève Hasenohr, 'L'essor des bibliothèques privées aux XIV^{e} et XV^{e} siècles', in *Histoire des bibliothèques françaises, vol. 1, Les bibliothèques médiévales du VI siècle à 1530*, ed. André Vernet (Paris:Promodis, 1989), 215–63.

[37] Jones, 'Les manuscrits enluminés d'Anne de Bretagne', 87–88.

The place of religious books, which were preponderant in all women's libraries, equally varied according to the personality of each female sovereign. It was, for example, emphasized in the library of Charlotte of Savoy, who led a withdrawn and almost ascetic life in Amboise, where her time was divided between pious deeds and readings.[38] Seventy percent of the works in her library were books on morality and spirituality, such as Jean Gerson's *The Mountain of Contemplation* and the *Visions of Saint Catherine of Siena*. Only the libraries owned by Blanche of Navarre (1398) and Margaret of York, Duchess of Burgundy (1503), exceeded this percentage.[39]

Even so, female sovereigns also collected profane works of historical, political and entertainment literature, which were sometimes at the forefront of current literary and scientific developments.[40] These can be classified in four major categories.

First, there was didactic literature. Aristocratic women were responsible for educating their children and gathering works that were likely to help instruct them. Giles of Rome's *De regimine principum*, which was addressed to the future Philip IV the Fair in 1279 and translated into French by Henri de Gauchy as early as 1282, was present in the libraries of Clementia of Hungary, Blanche of Navarre and Charlotte of Savoy. In reality, Charlotte owned a nearly complete panoply of such didactic literature, from Jacobus de Cessolis's treatise (*The Book of Chess*) to the more recent *Jardin des nobles* by the Cordelier Pierre des Gros[41]—works that were destined to instruct the young Charles with whom she lived. She also owned books more specifically dedicated to educating women, for example those written by Christine de Pizan (*The Book of the City of Ladies* and *The Book of the Three Virtues*) and *Enseignements à ses filles* by Geoffroy de La Tour Landry (written in circa 1371–1372).

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[38] Legaré, 'Charlotte de Savoie's Library', 37–41.

[39] Hasenohr, 'L'essor des bibliothèques privées', 259.

[40] Boudet, 'La bibliothèque de Clémence de Hongrie', 499–514; Lequain, *L'éducation des femmes*, 605–50.

[41] Legaré, 'Charlotte de Savoie's Library', 37–41.

Next, there was historical and geographical literature. It was recommended that women read history books as a means of edification through good examples from the past. Every queen had one or more copies of the *Grandes Chroniques de France*, a vast compilation retracing the history of the kings of France from their origins until 1461. Vincent de Beauvais's *Speculum historiale*—which Joan of Burgundy commissioned Jean de Vignay to translate into French and which recounts the history of the world after Adam and Eve left Paradise—was a classic in women's libraries, as was Livy's *History of Rome* (in the French translation by Pierre Bersuire at John II the Good's request).[42] To this, Blanche of Navarre added the *Chroniques d'Outremer* and a history of the Holy Land written by Guillaume de Tyr (before 1184)[43] and Charlotte of Savoy added Marco Polo's *Livre des Merveilles*.[44]

Another category was that of courtly literature and entertainment literature. Clementia of Hungary owned a copy of the well-known *Roman de la Rose*, which was successively written by Guillaume de Lorris (in around 1230) and Jean de Meun (in around 1270) and which provoked heated debate on the status and role of women.[45] The Arthurian novel was equally represented in women's collections, particularly the works of Chrétien de Troyes and the myth of Tristan and Isolde.[46] Boccaccio's works were also fashionable at court. Charlotte of Savoy owned two translations of *De casibus virorum illustrium*, which offered narratives of the lives of 90 illustrious figures.

The final category was encyclopedic, scientific and philosophical literature. In particular, queens had access to the most famous example: the *De proprietatibus rerum* by the Franciscan Bartholomew of England. Charlotte of Savoy, among others, had a French translation of this work (by Jean Corbechon in 1372). Even more surprising was the fact that women owned works of which the subject matter initially appears to be more masculine, such as hunting literature, with works like Gaston Phébus's *Livre de la chasse* and the *Déduit des chiens et des oiseaux* owned by Blanche of Navarre. However, it should not be forgotten that women equally partook of the pastime of hunting. Their collections also included medical, practical and curative treatises, particularly works offering dietary and nutritional advice.[47] Women were also interested in astronomy. Clementia of Hungary owned a copy of the extraordinary *Almanach perpetuum* by the famous Jewish doctor and astronomer Profatius. Composed around 1300, it made it possible to trace the position of the seven planets known at the time in a way that was theoretically perpetual.[48] Women's libraries were also filled with antique philosophy, such as *The Consolation of Philosophy* written by Boethius in the sixth century, which discussed knowledge of both the self and the world. Marie of Anjou and Charlotte of Savoy each had copies of the French translation.[49]

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[42] Hasenhor, 'L'essor des bibliothèques privées', 259; Lequain, *L'éducation des femmes*, 703.

[43] Brigitte Buettner, 'Le système des objets dans le testament de Blanche de Navarre', *Clio. Femmes et images* 19 (2004), 37–62.

[44] Legaré, 'Charlotte de Savoie's Library', 37–41.

[45] Boudet, 'La bibliothèque de Clémence de Hongrie', 499–514.

[46] Lequain, *L'éducation des femmes*, 725.

Female sovereigns thus assembled great libraries, which reveal three types of specifically feminine literary sensibilities. With the exception of works devoted to the chapel, the manuscripts they owned were almost exclusively written in the French language. There was a preponderance of religious, ascetic and moral works, much more than those found in men's libraries. Finally, certain literary domains were little represented, such as patristic texts (like Saint Augustine's *City of God* and Saint Gregory's *Dialogues*)[50] and works on political science. Joan of Burgundy, however, was an exception to the rule, for she commissioned translations of such political treatises as Jacobus de Cessolis's *Game of Chess*. Works focusing on the education and defense of women—especially those by Christine de Pizan—were especially present in women's collections. But this was not a specifically feminine interest, since kings and princes were also very fond of such works.

Queens as Cultural Advocates and Patronesses

Queens did not only establish rich libraries. They were also active literary patronesses. Indeed, the works inventoried in their libraries were generally either inherited, given to them or acquired, when they had not already been commissioned from contemporary writers.

The central focus of every connection was firstly familial. Manuscripts were considered to be personal property, bequeathed to the presumed heir or shared between various members of a family. In the two codicils she drafted in 1396 and 1398, Blanche of Navarre, a dowager queen with no direct heir, was careful to divide her most precious manuscripts between her close relatives.[51] Certain volumes seem to have been passed on from queen to queen. Blanche bequeathed to Isabeau of Bavaria a *miroir aux princesses* that she had herself received from Philip VI's wife Joan of Burgundy.

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[47] Monica H. Green, 'The Possibilities of Literacy and the Limits of Reading: Women and the Gendering of Medical Literacy', in *Women's Healthcare in the Medieval West: Texts and Contexts* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 68.

[48] Boudet, 'La bibliothèque de Clémence de Hongrie', 499–514.

[49] Lequain, *L'éducation des femmes*, 632.

[50] Hasenhor, 'L'essor des bibliothèques privées', 252.

Gifts were likewise exchanged between 'the living'. Luxury editions—often New Year's gifts, as valuable as examples of orfevrerie and jewelry, that were readily vaunted, given, and exchanged—were part of the circulation of precious objects, attesting to a patron's enlightened taste or love of splendor.[52] The many *ex libris*, mottoes and coats of arms found in books reveal how certain volumes circulated. The psalter was written in 1300 for the abbaye of Peterborough, then the abbot Geoffroy de Croyland gave it in 1317 to the cardinal Gaucelm d'Eu, who donated it to his uncle, John XXII. Then John XXII gave it to Clemence de Hongrie in 1318.[53] Numerous manuscripts owned by Marie of Anjou and Charlotte of Savoy were also gifts from close relatives or servants at court. For example, Peter of Beaujeu gave his mother-in-law Charlotte of Savoy a copy of Jean Mansel's *Fleur des histoires*.[54]

Queens also established their libraries by acquiring works from booksellers. Isabeau of Bavaria procured Jacobus de Voragine's *Golden Legend* from a bookseller in Paris in 1399.[55] Queens could also acquire manuscripts when testaments were executed. This was the case of Joan of Évreux, who bought 13 volumes from her sister-in-law Clementia of Hungary's library in 1328. Indeed, in the event that a queen died with no descendants, the rule was that her property first be sold to members of her husband's family.[56] With the works they commissioned, queens played the role of cultural instigators. Some were even well-informed patronesses who gave writers and artists work, whether it be commissions for translations or original works, thus contributing to literary creation during the Late Middle Ages.

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[51] Buettner, 'Le système des objets', 37–62.

[52] Robin, 'Le luxe des collections', 193; Hasenhor, 'L'essor des bibliothèques privées', 226.

[53] Boudet, 'La bibliothèque de Clémence de Hongrie', 499–514.

[54] Lequain, *L'éducation des femmes*, 587.

[55] Paris, AN, KK 41, fol. 258.

[56] Boudet, 'La bibliothèque de Clémence de Hongrie', 499–514.

One dauphine, the future Louis XI's first wife Margaret of Scotland, was even a writer herself who composed a series of poetic works.[57]

Since they either no longer read or had trouble reading Latin, female sovereigns had a number of texts translated. Philip VI's wife Joan of Burgundy was a particularly active patroness in this area, placing Jean de Vignay in charge of a series of translations of religious works (*Epistles* and Jacobus de Voragine's *The Golden Legend*) and historical and political texts (Vincent de Beauvais's *Miroir historial*, Primat's *Chronicles* and Jacobus de Cessolis's *Moralized Game of Chess*[58]). During the fifteenth century, Isabeau of Bavaria commissioned translations of devotional works (notably a Passion of Christ[59]) and 'medical' texts (such as a treatise on plants attributed to Arnaud de Villeneuve[60]).

Other than translations, female sovereigns either inherited or commissioned original works. At the end of the thirteenth century, Philip III's wife Marie of Brabant had already sung the praises of courtly literature. At her request (and that of her sister-in-law Blanche, Ferdinand de la Cerda's widow), Adenet le Roi composed his well-known *Cléomadès.*[61]

However, queens commissioned two types of works above all: didactic and religious. The Franciscan Durand de Champagne wrote a *Speculum dominarum* (*Miroir des dames*) for Joan of Navarre, which led to two French translations. It was also upon the queen's request that Jean de Joinville wrote his biography of Louis IX, a vast recollection of the king's activities that was meant to be an edifying example for his successors. This work, which was completed in 1309 after Joan's death, was dedicated to her son, the future Louis X.[62]

Isabeau of Bavaria's account shows the increasing predominance of literary commissions, particularly of pious books. For 1398 alone, other than the translation that has already been mentioned, she commissioned a *Life of Saint Margaret* from Pierre le Portier, which she subsequently had illuminated by Robin de Fontaines. The artist also made 50 miniatures for a book of hours that she had just acquired (*Heures de la Croix et du saint Esprit*). She also commissioned a 'small Hour of Notre Dame' from a writer in Paris.[63] Charlotte of Savoy likewise encouraged the production of religious literature to feed her meditations, particularly those pertaining to the suffering and death of Christ.[64]

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[57] Contamine, *Autour de Marguerite d'Écosse,* 6.

[58] Allirot, *Filles de roy de France*, 464–68.

[59] Paris, AN, KK 41, fol. 185; Gibbons, 'The Piety', 216.

[60] Lequain, *L'éducation des femmes*, 669.

[61] Stirnemann, 'Les bibliothèques princières et privées', 178.

[62] Lequain, *L'éducation des femmes*, 696.

Reginal commissions were also linked to the literature of the day. Thus, Isabeau of Bavaria received a large collection of *Works* by Christine de Pizan, probably when New Year's gifts were exchanged during January 1414. The frontispiece depicted the well-known dedication scene.[65] The queen seems to have commissioned the manuscript, as the author remarked: 'I have, madam, organized … , completed writing, and well illuminated it as soon as I received yo[ur] commission'.[66] As for Anne of Brittany, she was at the heart of a literary circle and was the dedicatee and commissioner of many works, particularly the *Vie des femmes illustres* written by the Dominican Antoine Dufour and inspired by Boccaccio. This vast gallery of female portraits began with the Virgin Mary and included more recent figures like Joan of Arc.[67] Furthermore, the queen encouraged writers to draft long histories of the duchy of Brittany. In 1498, she supported Pierre Le Baud as he prepared a new version of his *Croniques et ystoires des Bretons* (completed in 1480), by ordering that he have free access to the ducal archives. Shortly before his death in 1505, he gave Anne a fully revised and augmented edition of his *Livre des croniques des roys, ducs et princes de Bretaigne armoricaine*. Similarly, Alain Bouchart wrote a new history of Brittany, which was encouraged by the queen and published in 1514.[68] Anne of Brittany shared in the public's enthusiasm for classical literature and humanism, which was just developing. She was offered a French translation of Petrarch's *Remedies for Fortune Fair and Foul*, realized in 1502. She was also interested in rhetorical and allegorical poetry and prose. François Robertet worked in her service, as did the very erudite Jean Lemaire de Belges.

Thus, literary and artistic patronage was consubstantial with the royal role, for both kings and their wives. The works—notably literary—commissioned by queens depended on their personalities and tastes (such as Marie of Brabant's predilection for courtly literature and Charlotte of

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[63] Paris, AN, KK 41, fol. 184–187.

[64] Hasenhor, 'L'essor des bibliothèques privées', 252.

[65] London, British Library, Ms. Harley 4431.

[66] 'Si l'ay fait, madame, ordener … , parfiner (parfaire) d'escripre et bien enluminer, dès que vo[tre] commande en receu.' *Paris-1400*, 125.

[67] Jones, 'Les manuscrits enluminés d'Anne de Bretagne', 89.

[68] Ibid., 89–91.

Savoy's preference for contemplative works) as well as their 'cultural education'. Clementia of Hungary, for example, came from the kingdom of Naples, which was endowed with a brilliant artistic and literary court frequented by Petrarch, Boccaccio, Giotto and Simone Martini. The works commissioned by queens were also linked to their financial capacities, which were advantageous in the case of dowager queens. Clementia of Hungary, Joan of Évreux and Blanche of Navarre established a large part of their treasury (objects and books) after their husbands died.

Female patronage in the cultural domain was obviously not specific to the queens of France, but corresponded to the courtly environment of France and other principalities. As early as 1305, Mahaut of Artois had a luxurious copy of the *Chroniques des rois de France* written and decorated with gold lettering.[69] Isabella of Portugal actively encouraged literary creation in Burgundy and opened the ducal collection up to Portuguese influence. The patronage of Anne of France, Lady of Beaujeu, at the end of the fifteenth century and Louise of Savoy during the early sixteenth century was important. Like the queen, these powerful women exerted an enormous influence on the arts and thinking of their day. For the court of Moulins, this is attested to today by the magnificent and extremely refined portraits painted by Jean Hey, who worked for Anne of France and her husband Peter II of Bourbon from 1488.[70]

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[69] Robin, 'Le luxe des collections aux XIV^{e} et XV^{e} siècles', 194; Lequain, *L'éducation des femmes*, 739.

[70] *France 1500*, 158–59, 160, 164 and 166; Elizabeth l'Estrange, 'Sainte Anne et le mécénat d'Anne de France', in *Patronnes et mécènes en France à la Renaissance*, ed. Kathleen Wilson-Chevalier (Saint-Étienne: Publications de l'Université de Saint-Étienne, 2007), 135–54; and Elodie Lequain, 'Anne de France et les livres : la tradition et le pouvoir', in *Patronnes et mécènes en France à la Renaissance*, 155–68.

Conclusion

So what conclusions can be drawn about the power and role of the last medieval queens, who in France were never simply the 'wives of kings'?

This study has focused on the last two centuries of the Middle Ages, during a period when real power (*auctoritas*) had been entirely in the king's hands for at least a century (since the end of the twelfth century) due to the progressive consolidation of royal authority and administration. With the exception of two periods of regency under Blanche of Castile (in 1226 and 1248) and within the limited framework of a delegation of power, queens—who had long been associated with power—disappeared from the royal charters and from all governance in the late medieval period. This change was not specific to the kingdom of France. In Germany, the political influence of empresses also diminished from the mid-thirteenth century onward, when it was confronted with the increasing strength of elector-princes.[1] In England too, the last medieval female sovereigns—who were all queen consorts—did not have any *auctoritas.*

The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries saw no shift in this evolution. While the queen was no longer—or very rarely—associated with the government, her power was redefined in a much less negative way than historiography has often led people to believe. Her role was thus valued in at least four domains: legal, funerary, normative and ceremonial. The first

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[1] Amalie Fössel, 'From the Consors Regni to the Koenigs Husfrouwe? Some Comments on the Decline of the Queens' Power in the Medieval German Empire', in *Femmes de pouvoir, femmes politiques*, eds. Éric Bousmar et al., 83–89.

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changes began as early as the end of the thirteenth century. In 1294, Philip IV the Fair promulgated the first regency law granting all power during the royal minority to the 'mother of the children of France': his wife Joan of Navarre. He was undoubtedly influenced by both Roman-Byzantine legislation and the model of government his great-grandmother Blanche of Castile had borrowed. To practice (Blanche's regency in 1226) was added law, one that legitimized female regency—at least under his reign. During the same period, Philip IV chose to place the reginal body within the 'cemetery of kings' in the necropolis of Saint-Denis. In 1295, his grandmother Margaret of Provence thus joined her husband Louis IX in his tomb. Eleven years later, funerary reconfigurations ordered by Philip IV placed the couple's tomb at the center of the sanctuary, thus putting the queen at the heart of royal funerary politics. Again around the same time (in 1297), normative discourse reinforced the changes that were already under way. Joan of Navarre's confessor, the Franciscan Durand de Champagne, officially acknowledged what had long been informally seen as the female sovereign's role, that of mediator between the king and his subjects.

The redefinition of the queen's 'office' continued under the Valois. Reginal bodies were definitively included in the Dionysian abbey at a time when it had become necessary to assert the continuity of power and dynastic legitimacy. Regency laws (under Charles V in 1374 and under Charles VI in 1407) gave the queen, if not governance of the kingdom, at least the tutelage of the children of France, an acknowledgment linked to her 'natural love' for them.

The queen was also promoted ceremonially, within the framework of a monarchy that made itself publicly visible in order to conquer people's hearts. During entries, such as funerals, both her real body and her symbolic body were 'put on display'—dressed with all the sovereign attributes and incarnating royal dignity, just like the monarch's body. Political discourse reinforced this valorization of the queen. As 'lady of peace', she was supposed to intercede in order to quell conflicts (her primary role), notably those between princes. But her mediation extended beyond this. Having the power to influence the king, she was thought of as the advocate and protector of her subjects. Like the Queen of Heaven, 'mother of all Christianity' (according to Christine de Pizan in 1405), she was 'the mother of the people'. In practice, her interventions were important and were sought after, notably by ecclesiastic and urban communities. Thus, the female sovereign played a direct role in the circulation of love within her kingdom through both her mediation and her role as ‘queen of hearts’, deploying her charity over numerous territories (for, without love, the prince was nothing more than a tyrant). Finally, while the queen did not have any *auctoritas*, she was delegated power and presided over the Council when it was necessary to compensate for the king’s absence ‘due to war’ (Philip VI and Charles VII) or illness (Charles VI). This was the case of Joan of Burgundy in 1338, Isabeau of Bavaria in the early fifteenth century and Marie of Anjou in 1434.

The evolution of the ‘profession of queen’ was linked neither to the exheredation of the daughters of the crown of France (1316) nor to the subsequent rediscovery of Salic Law. The attribution of a place at Saint-Denis and the regency laws preceded this. While the somewhat theatrical display of the reginal body during major rituals indeed began during the second half of the fourteenth century, it was in reality integrated into the new ‘communications strategy’ put in place by the Valois. The ceremonial monarchy desired by Charles V and his successors corresponded to their search for legitimacy, one that was contested both outside of and within the kingdom. Beyond politics alone, ceremonialization was more broadly linked to the ‘courtly world’ of France and Europe, within a permanent climate of emulation and competition. The celebration of sumptuous entries and funerals was not specific to France. As early as 1377, Richard II made his *grande entrée* in the capital of London, which was enlivened by all sorts of entertainment. His wife Anne of Bohemia received the same honors in 1392.

So how can such promotion of the queen be explained? Firstly, her assimilation with the Virgin Mary contributed to this. During the thirteenth century, an illumination had already depicted Blanche of Castile as a crowned Virgin interceding before her son Louis IX.[2] However, such a comparison—which was a source of prestige for the monarchy—was above all formalized during the following century under the Valois (Charles VI and his advisors), who developed a new ceremonial presentation of the queen using the allegorical form of the Virgin Mary (for Isabeau’s entry in Paris), one that was subsequently theorized by Christine de Pizan. The comparison continued thereafter. In 1505, Pierre Gringoire published a collection entitled *Les Abus du Monde*, in which was included a poem with an evocative title: *Ballade et supplication à la Vierge Marie et se peult inter-*

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[2] Marina Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1990), 114.

préter sur la royne de France[3] (*Ballad and Supplication to the Virgin Mary, Which Can Be Addressed to the Queen of France*) (Anne of Brittany). Thus, the figure of the queen as Virgin corresponded with the (over)sanctification of the monarch, who became the 'very Christian king' in the fourteenth century. Like Mary, she was supposed to unfurl her protective cloak over all of her subjects. Like her, she became the great intercessor between the king and his people, armed with peace in order to bring about the reconciliation of hearts.

The growth of such a mediating figure was especially important during the Late Middle Ages, since it corresponded to a dual evolution in politics. On the one hand, the progression of statal centralization had increased the distance between the monarch and his subjects.[4] On the other hand, in politics, love was now at the heart of many discourses and treatises.

The assertion of the female sovereign as mother of the royal children equally played a major role when it came to valorizing her. Despite Aristotelian theories attributing the male seed with the primary role in procreation, the queen contributed to the exaltation and mystique of royal blood in her own right. Far from marrying outside his station, the king was careful to choose his wife from among the princesses of very noble blood, which, when mixed with his own blood, was supposed to engender the beautiful line of the children of France. Royalty subsequently displayed itself as a couple or a family. The king was no longer without the queen, both in life (as depicted on the facades of palaces and churches) and in death (twin tombs at Saint-Denis). This new monumental representation of royalty embodied by two people valorized the figure of the queen as a projection of her husband's public body. The appearance of a female habit of majesty, directly modeled on that of the king ('in azure and fleurs-de-lis'), also contributed to promoting her. The female sovereign became the king's chromatic double both ceremonially (Isabeau of Bavaria in 1389) and within the gold and azure of parchments (Jean Fouquet in the *Grandes Chroniques de France*).

Thus, during the Late Middle Ages, royalty was dual, embodied by two people with complementary roles. The king of war and justice could not be disassociated from a more feminine form of government—a maternal, mediating and protective figure who did or did not correspond to reality.

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[3] Didier Le Fur, *Anne de Bretagne : miroir d'une reine, historiographie d'un mythe*, (Paris: Guénégaud, 2000), 93.

[4] This also occurred in England: see John Carmi Parsons, 'The Queen's Intercession in Thirteenth-Century England', in *Power of the Weak: Studies on Medieval Women*, eds. J. Carpenter and S.-B. Mac Lean (Urbana, 1995), 126–77.

The exciting reign of Anne, Duchess of Brittany, who was the only princess to have twice served as queen, was therefore situated within the continuity of the last medieval female sovereigns. She fulfilled the traditional roles attributed to the 'wives of kings', mediating and representational roles coupled with real political action linked to the governing of her duchy—which she accomplished alongside Louis XII. In addition to reginal continuity, there were new developments, as Anne's reign heralded the Renaissance period and its 'modern' queens, with such historiographical examples as Catherine de' Medici and her exceptional power. Distinguished by her humanist culture, Catherine played a major political role even before the king's death in 1559. Henry II temporarily placed the Council under her authority from 1548 and thrice entrusted her with the lieutenancy of the kingdom when he left on military expeditions.[5] As regent for her sons, who were minors, her name has remained inextricably linked with the Wars of Religion and the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre (24 August 1572). The dark legend surrounding her began shortly thereafter, with the queen being stigmatized by Huguenots as being a criminal, a magician and a poisoner.

Nonetheless, in France, female sovereigns maintained their 'simple bodies' as wives of kings, even when they were regents.[6] The situation was completely different in neighboring kingdoms. In England, Mary and Elizabeth Tudor were reigning queens who had real power, embodying *auctoritas* as queens of war and justice. Elizabeth I's reign (1533-1603) was especially remarkable, since she governed alone as the Virgin Queen with no male figure to help her. In Castile, however, while female sovereigns could inherit the kingdom, they only wielded authority when assisted by their husbands (Isabella the Catholic) or sons (Berengaria of Castile). The *Reconquista* demanded that a man of war be present at their side.

Even when they reigned, queens did not escape the stereotypes linked to their sex. In Tilbury on 9 August 1588, Elizabeth I thus had to 'travesty' herself metaphorically by making herself king in order to harangue her troops, who were confronted with the advance of the Invincible Spanish Armada (sent by Philip II). Let us leave her the final word: 'I am come amongst you … resolved, in the midst and heat of the battle, to live and die amongst you all; to lay down for my God, and for my kingdom, and my people, my honour and my blood, even in the dust. I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman; but I have the heart and stomach of a king.'[7]

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[5] Bernard Barbiche, 'La première régence de Catherine de Médicis (avril-juillet 1552)', in *Combattre, gouverner, écrire. Études réunies en l'honneur de Jean Chagniot* (Paris: Commission française d'histoire militaire - Institut de stratégie comparée - Economica, 2003); Denis Crouzet, *Le haut coeur de Catherine de Médicis : une raison politique aux temps de la Saint-Barthélemy* (Paris: A. Michel, 2005).

[6] Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957).

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[7] Isabelle Poutrin and Marie-Karine Schaub, eds., *Femmes et pouvoir politique. Les princesses d'Europe, XV^{e}-XVIII^{e} siècle* (Paris: Bréal, 2007), 57.

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